Captivated By Him

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by ahappysolarsystem

Summary

Gojo Satoru returns from the Prison Realm into a world that loves him too much, and too wrongly.
Between Megumi’s obsession and Yuuta’s possession, the strongest human becomes the most carefully kept secret.

A story of love that crosses the line it swore never to touch.

Notes

I wrote this long ago (back in 2022) and only had time to translate it to English now after a translation elective I took at my Masters' now. Therefore, the setting is a bit old-dated, that means the Culling Game did happen, but Gojo Satoru was not been released from the Prison Realm, at least that's what the public knows. That story sets in this ambiguity of the end game back in 2022

- A translation of Captivated By Him by ahappysolarsystem

Chapter 1: Yuta | Detained

After the Shibuya battle, too many things changed in the Jujutsu world.

Old family heads died. New ones rose from the Culling Game. The Kamo clan was wiped out completely. The Three Great Families became two. Zenin Megumi and Gojo Yuuta stood at the top together, whether anyone liked it or not.

It was almost laughable. For generations they worshipped bloodlines, but in the end they had to drag two outcasted back and force the inheritance onto them. People whispered, of course. They said Megumi was the son of a mercenary who once stained the Jujutsu world with blood. They said Yuuta was only a distant relative, seven generations removed, brought home just to replace the Six Eyes that had been sealed away.

The whispers didn't last long. In the end, it didn't matter whether their blooglines were legitimate or not. Both new family heads were Special Grade sorcerers. Their strength alone was enough to silence everyone. Those who were smart learned to stay away. People warned each other quietly that neither of them was kind or forgiving. Especially the Gojo family head. Anyone who crossed him would never end well.

While those whispers covered the Jujutsu world with an invisible layer of fear, heavy like the atmosphere of an old feudal era where common people did not dare to disobey the king, the so-called cold and cruel family head was standing in the Gojo household kitchen, carefully making sweets.

Yuuta peeled open the white mochi skin and rolled it thin, making sure it would not be too heavy to eat. He mixed whipped cream with matcha powder until the filling became soft and fragrant, pale green in color. He spread the skin over thin paper, lightly dusted it with flour, and placed one spoonful of the green filling onto the white surface. His long fingers pressed gently into the dough, leaving a faint mark that was quickly smoothed away as he shaped it into a round ball. Hands that had grown up holding blades and cursed spirits now moved with extreme care, slowly rolling the sweet until it reached the size he wanted. He placed the finished mochi onto the tray beside many others he had made that afternoon. All of them were nearly the same size, as if the person who made them knew very well how large

they needed to be to fit the mouth of the one who would eat them. Large enough to be satisfying. Small enough that those beautiful pink lips would not struggle to take it in, eyes watering slightly - the natural reaction of that body when forced to accept something too much for it.

When the wooden tray was filled with six full rows, Yuuta finally stopped. He called the servants to clean the kitchen, then carried the tray himself toward the head's room.

The Gojo estate was ancient, built according to traditional Japanese geomancy: mountains behind, water in front. The head's chambers sat at the center of the grounds, gathering fortune while also using the authority of the family head to suppress the entire estate. The mansion was enormous, made of countless rooms, many of which had probably never been visited even after generations. With such size came secrets: rooms storing cursed tools that opened only to sorcerers strong enough, hidden paths behind the mountain used by young heirs sneaking out for secret meetings, and a sealed chamber connected directly to the family head's study. A secret room reinforced with cursed energy and tools, ensuring that only the current Gojo family head - recognized by the clan and holding its seal - could open it, from either side. Yuuta lightly touched the dragon-shaped seal on the desk, pushing cursed energy into it. The hidden door behind the plaque revealed itself. Humming softly, he carried the tray inside.

This was the chamber that held the treasures of generations of Gojo heads.

When Yuta first discovered it, he worked hard to turn it into a place fit for living. He found a cursed tool that created illusions and borrowed Megumi's Ten Shadows technique to reflect the scenery outside the estate. A magnificent view appeared in the window that did not truly exist. Daylight, moonlight, sometimes rain, sometimes falling peach blossoms - so the person inside would not feel too lonely. The dark, damp room became a space filled with light. Yuta also brought in a small sofa and a real movie projector, with shelves of films he regularly replaced for the other person's entertainment. The projector faced the window, which sat at the center wall, drawing light into the heart of the room. There stood a crimson velvet bed, custom-made by artisans in Kyoto. Yuta spent a great deal of effort preparing that bed. From the thousand-year cedar frame to every layer of velvet in the blankets and pillows, everything was personally chosen by the busy Gojo family head himself, pouring quiet affection into each object.

At this moment, someone was sleeping on that bed.

The person buried his face into the soft velvet pillow, exposing only white hair and a pale neck. Porcelain skin contrasted sharply with the red velvet, creating a scene like a priceless jade treasure offered to an emperor, carefully placed inside a silk-lined box. It was beautiful enough to awaken desire, the urge to touch, to claim. Many people had such desires. Yuuta had seen them since his first day in the Jujutsu world. Geto Suguru. Kenjaku. Later even Sukuna, and Megumi. All of them wanted to steal his treasure.

But Yuuta had learned.

His first lesson was obsession - never letting go, as he did with Rika. His lesson now was protection.

To love was to protect.

So he brought his treasure here, placed him in the safest place possible, surrounded by the most precious things. His treasure, in his hands, for him to love and protect.

Love.

There was a time Yuuta did not dare think of love when it came to *him*. Respect, admiration, reverence - yes. But love felt impossible. Love belonged between equals, and the gap in strength between them once felt unreachable. Yuuta believed he was not qualified to love him. So he hid those feelings, locking them behind glass, thinking they would never grow. Then Kenjaku appeared. Shibuya happened. And *he* disappeared before Yuuta could return. On the flight home, Yuuta was almost drowned by hatred toward himself. *If only he hadn't run away. If only he had faced his feelings. If only he had returned to Tokyo when given the chance.* So many "if onlys." If he had done even one of them, maybe it wouldn't have ended with him being sealed in the Prison Realm, fate unknown.

On that flight, Yuuta shattered the glass cage inside himself and carved a promise into his own heart: *he would never let go again.*

Luckily, everything passed. The Culling Game ended. Satoru returned to his arms. When the Prison Realm broke, cursed crystal shattered and revealed Satoru barely breathing, collapsing into Yuta's embrace. The seal had eaten away Satoru's both cursed energy and physical strength. Yuuta had spent endless time and effort restoring him.

Countless rare treasures. Lost cursed tools. Blood and sweat spilled to protect him.

Luck smiled again when Satoru finally woke.

Those sky-blue eyes opened once more, bringing warmth back into Yuta's world. This time, he swore he would never let Satoru slip away again, no matter the cost.

He killed and controlled the higher-ups to free Satoru from their cruelty.

He hid the truth that the Prison Realm had been broken, letting the world mourn a Satoru who would never return.

He held a wedding in the Gojo estate, inside the treasure chamber, declaring they belonged to each other until death.

He even took the Gojo name for himself, becoming Gojo Yuuta, so nothing would ever stand between them again.

Nothing remained.

Yuta placed the tray beside the bed and lay down on the velvet, holding his most precious treasure.

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When Yuta woke, the person in his arms was still asleep.

Recently, Satoru's sleep had been unstable. He struggled to fall asleep at night and slept deeply during the day like a lazy white cat. At first, the cat avoided its owner's touch, always turning away. Lately, though, he no longer turned his back. Instead, he unconsciously pressed his face against Yuuta's chest in his sleep. From this angle, Yuuta could see the redness at the corners of his eyes and faint traces of tears.

Satoru was especially gentle when asleep. Like a tame cat, allowing Yuta to stroke his white hair. Yuuta's hand slid down to the slender neck, still marked by bite marks from the night before, then to the collarbone that arched when Yuuta pushed to the *edge*, forcing him to orgasm. Satoru's body was sensitive. Yuuta loved making him tremble

beneath his touch, loved the illusion that he had tamed the king of beasts and locked him inside a golden cage of his own making. The illusion stirred his body. He bit down on Satoru's collarbone, tracing teeth over old marks. This was the body he had dreamed of through his youth. Satoru would cry, beg him to be gentle, to stop - sometimes even whisper love if Yuuta forced him the right way.

The more Satoru begged, the more violently Yuuta reacted, until dawn arrived.

Afterward, Satoru would fall asleep in his arms, often not waking until noon.

Yuuta glanced at the clock. It was almost time. He leaned down and kissed those soft lips, wanting to extend this moment before Satoru woke up. As expected, when his tongue pressed deeper, the body beneath him stiffened. Hands tried to push him away, but Yuuta caught them easily, pinning them above his head. Funny, he thought, using techniques Satoru himself had taught him. Satoru's wrists were slender. Though tall, his body was thin. The skin there was pale and fragile, veins visible beneath it. Fragile, precious - as if begging to be protected, to be marked, to be wrapped in layers of red velvet.

That was why Yuuta wanted to place the most beautiful ornament in the world there.

Something that belonged only to Gojo Satoru. Something that told everyone else he belonged to Yuta.

For example, a cursed chain Yuuta brought back from distant China.

He bought it at a cursed tool auction in Xinjiang, from a small man who called himself The Storyteller. The man owned many treasures but never named a price, only asking buyers to listen to the story of the object they took.

The story of the chain was short. The trader told Yuta to sit on the only chair in the tent, one wrapped in rough animal hide, while he himself lowered his body to the ground beside him. He sat close to the fire, eyes fixed on the dancing flames, and began to speak of a king who lived in ancient China thousands of years ago.

That king, during a journey far from his palace, once fell into danger and was saved by an immortal. At first sight, the king gave his heart away. He wished to place the immortal beside him, to offer the seat closest to the throne to someone so beautiful and so kind. But the

immortal had already promised himself to another, betrothed long before, and gently but firmly rejected the king's love.

The king could not accept this ending. He commanded the royal sorcerer to go against heaven and rewrite fate, to forge a cursed chain that would drain all cursed power from whoever wore it. Bound by that chain, the immortal was imprisoned at the king's side. Their breath of cursed energy vanished completely, and the one who once searched for him could no longer sense his existence

For decades, the king kept the immortal beside him. What began with force slowly turned into persuasion, persuasion into temptation. He gave everything he had, loving as though he wished to tear out his own heart and lungs and place them in the immortal's hands. Yet in return, he received only a solitary back, a figure that never once turned to look at him.

Even when the king lay dying, the immortal remained just as cold. That indifference stirred a final trace of cruelty in the king's heart. He told the immortal, now a consort trapped deep within the palace, that the fiancé from long ago had exhausted body and soul searching for him, until his soul energy exhausted and reincarnation itself became impossible.

The immortal showed no response. He only stared at the king in silence.

And when the king finally died, the last image reflected in his fading eyes was a single tear sliding down the beautiful cheek of the one he had loved for his entire life.

After that night, Yuta placed the chain on Satoru's wrist.

From the outside, it looked like nothing more than an ordinary silver bracelet, even lighter than most common jewelry. But in truth, nothing could cut it unless the wearer allowed it, after it had tasted blood and acknowledged its master. It could also adjust its length on its own, allowing Yuta to fasten one end to the crimson velvet bed and the other around Satoru's wrist, without restricting his movement too much.

A perfect gift.

And yet, sadly, Satoru seemed to hate it.

He used all his strength to push Yuta away, repeating fragments of

Infinity again and again, as if trying to raise a barrier between them, as if he could still escape. The foolish white cat did not yet realize that this Special Grade cursed tool had sealed both his cursed energy and his technique entirely, leaving behind a Satoru whose body had been eroded, weak and unable to resist.

That night, Yuta gave Satoru all of his love.

With his own hands, he peeled away layer after layer- the divinity of the Child of Heaven, the brilliance of the Six Eyes, the title of the strongest - until only a bare, beautiful Satoru remained, fragile enough to stir the heart. He stepped onto the altar, dragged the God down from his pedestal, tore away the wings meant to carry him toward the sky, and held him tightly before claiming him.

Without cursed energy, Satoru's body was soft like flowing water, warm and yielding in Yuta's hands when he touched each sensitive place. Yuta bit gently at his ear and felt the body beneath him tense and shudder. He scattered red marks across that beautiful back, soothing the trembling as it came in waves. He plucked the ripe, celestial peach, and in return received eyes brimming with tears.

And when Yuta finally entered him, Satoru clutched his hands tightly, begging again and again for him to stop.

A thin layer of sweat covered those pale wrists, making the silver chain stand out painfully bright. The sight only made Yuta want more, take more, until Satoru had no choice but to give and give in return.

By the time Yuta finally released the trembling white cat, the corners of Satoru's eyes and his lips were red enough to bleed. He looked at Yuta with an emptiness so complete it seemed hollow, yet still allowed Yuta to *have* him again, a second time, a third. Eventually, the Six Eyes closed. With no cursed energy left, Satoru's body was completely drained by Yuta's relentless taking. Exhausted beyond resistance, he fell unconscious in Yuta's arms. Only then did Yuta hold him close with quiet happiness, the two of them sinking together into sleep, embraced by the long, endless night.

Last night had been another night like that one - beginning with Satoru's resistance, and ending with Satoru falling asleep from sheer exhaustion in Yuta's arms. Yuta let out a quiet sigh. It had been more than a year now, yet Satoru still carried this bad habit, still had not grown used to the fact that he now belonged to him.

Yuta chose to see it as a lover's sulking. From time to time, he would

go down to the kitchen to make sweets to coax him, also to nourish Satoru, whose body seemed to grow thinner with each passing day. Kikifuku, learned from the shop Satoru had loved since his youth, Yuta remade it with care, hoping to light even the faintest spark in those sky-colored eyes.

Satoru is only sulking, Yuta thought. *As long as I try a little harder, he will shine for me again, filling my world with warmth, just like when we first met.*

With that thought, Yuta ended the deep kiss and leaned down to place a gentle one on the tip of the little cat's nose resting in his arms.

"Satoru… wake up and eat some kikifuku."

The cat opened his eyes and looked at him. His gaze passed over the tray of round, white, beautiful sweets, then turned away coldly. *Another sulk,* Yuta told himself again. Just a little more coaxing, and the cat would be happy once more.

Carefully, he picked up a piece of mochi and held it to those soft, pink lips, inviting him gently.

"Try a bite. I made it myself."

A pale, jade-like arm lifted, but instead of accepting it, it suddenly pushed away, knocking the sweet mochi to the floor. Outside, the rain began to fall again. Red-rimmed eyes looked at him, full of pain.

"Yuta… please don't do this anymore."

Don't do this - but what exactly was *this*? Yuta no longer understood. He had done everything he could. He had loved with his whole heart. He could not understand why Satoru could not feel his love.

Maybe Satoru needed to see it. To feel it. To be shown, again and again, until he understood how deep that love ran.

And so Yuta took him again, giving him all the love he had carried since his youth.

He saw Satoru cry.

And it seemed that he himself was crying too.

Holding Satoru close, Yuta suddenly remembered the painful, burning gaze from earlier. It reminded him of the flames in distant Xinjiang,

and then of the story of that devoted king.

In the end, that final tear shed by the immortal -

Was it shed for the death of someone long lost?

Or was it shed to bid farewell to the one who still remained?

Chapter 2: Megumi | Forced (1)

Zenin Megumi returned to the main house of the Gojo clan on an unusually cool autumn day. He came alone, riding the giant Peacock shikigami he had claimed after Shibuya, descending slowly before the thousand-year-old wooden gates of one of the oldest and most powerful bloodlines in the Jujutsu world.

After a brief announcement to the gatekeepers, a Gojo household servant soon emerged to receive him, bowing deeply as he respectfully invited Megumi to follow him to the clan head's study. Walking behind the old man along the wooden corridor that cut through the quiet garden, Megumi watched the servant's hunched back and suddenly felt an urge to laugh. *He has aged so quickly,* Megumi thought. Only ten years had passed, yet it looked as if a whole lifetime had gone by. More than ten years ago, it had been this same elderly servant who led him down this very corridor, guiding him to the reception hall when *he* first brought Megumi here. Back then, *he* had declared before the entire Gojo clan that Megumi was now his adopted son, and that from this day forward, the child must be granted all the respect owed to the heir of the Gojo household. The clan had been deeply dissatisfied with such a reckless proclamation - especially when the child he brought back so clearly bore the features of the infamous Zenin bastard. Servants reflected the will of their masters; while showing Megumi around the vast estate, they had treated him with distant politeness and thinly veiled coldness.

Ten years flowed past like a full cycle of life. No one could have imagined that Megumi would one day return to the Gojo estate under a completely different status - no longer the illegitimate child of a disgraced branch, but a man now treated with reverence by the entire Jujutsu world.

The path leading to the clan head's study was not long. One only needed to pass three turns and a large koi pond to arrive. The study was arranged in an ancient style, with a grand writing desk at its center. Beside it stood a red-lacquered folding screen inlaid with gold, placed next to a long couch for receiving guests. Every surface was carved with extraordinary care, adorned with patterns of the Four Divine Beasts that had been favored a thousand years ago. Every detail was meticulously tended to, because anyone who stepped into this room was likely someone of uncommon background. And of course, how could a guest personally invited into the Gojo clan head's

study ever be ordinary?

Yet in the past, *he* had brought Megumi - the child of a bastard, a boy who did not even have the right to bear the proper surname - into this room simply to play. Megumi still remembered how he was often made to sit in the chair behind the desk, killing time by fiddling with the objects scattered across its surface while waiting for him to - quoted exactly - “go piss those old men off until they died of anger.” Among the desk crowded with antiques and ancient cursed tools, Megumi had loved one item more than any other: a dragon-head seal carved in silver, its eyes set with sapphires as blue as the sky. White silver mingled with shimmering blue gemstone, and the child Megumi had been unable to stop touching it, over and over again. Once, he had even tried to activate the seal with his own technique. That was when the man had stopped him, laughing softly as he did, telling him that cursed tools like these were not toys for children- especially not for a foolish Megumi himself.

When he stepped inside, Okkotsu Yuuta - no, Gojo Yuuta now - was sitting on the long couch, polishing his cursed sword. The cold iron blade gleamed beneath the steady motion of his cloth, releasing a killing intent that could not be concealed after being bathed for so long in the blood of cursed spirits, curse users, and jujutsu sorcerers alike - through the Culling Game, and through that war fought to seize the seat of Gojo clan head. Hearing Megumi’s footsteps, Yuta lifted his head and tilted his chin toward the opposite side of the couch, signaling for him to sit.

Megumi said nothing. Nor did he follow the instruction. Instead, he walked deeper into the room at an unhurried pace, stopping before the writing desk he had played around so many times as a child.

“What are you doing here?” Yuuta asked.

Megumi heard the question from behind him, but did not bother to answer. He simply stood there, silently taking in the familiar layout of the room from ten years ago. Every generation of Gojo clan heads had deliberately added traces of their own personality to the study. But when it came to *him*, he had not bothered to add anything at all.

Because I’m lazy, he had said back then, when Megumi had curiously asked about the origins of the countless objects in the room, and why none of them seemed to belong to him personally.

When it came to Yuuta’s turn, nearly all the extravagant decorations

left behind by the previous clan head had been discarded. Only a few austere ink paintings remained, fitting his temperament. The desk that had once been crowded with decorative cursed tools was now as neat as a true work desk.

Only one thing remained.

The dragon-head seal Megumi had loved in his childhood.

Megumi reached out and lightly brushed his fingers over the white dragon's sapphire-blue eyes, caressing it as one would a treasured heirloom. Even without turning around, he could clearly feel that Yuuta had stopped polishing the blade, had lifted his head, and was now watching every single movement he made.

"Megumi," Yuuta repeated, his voice harsher now. "What are you doing here?"

This time, Megumi did not ignore him. He turned around, sat directly on the surface of the desk, and lifted the dragon-head seal into his hands, rolling it between his fingers as he examined it. He could sense Yuuta's impatience clearly - but still, he answered with calm indifference.

The two locked eyes for a moment. Then it was Megumi who broke the heavy silence.

"Where are you hiding him?"

A flicker of surprise crossed Yuuta's eyes, vanishing almost instantly.

"What are you talking about?!" Yuta snapped. "The seal hasn't been broken - Prison Realm is still protected within the sacred grounds of the Three Fam-"

"I'm asking you," Megumi said again, his voice low and sharp, "where are you hiding him?"

Yuuta had already gripped his sword, cursed energy coiling tightly around the blade, prepared to activate his technique and force the intruder - Megumi- out of the room. But before he could strike, Megumi moved first. A streak of cursed energy shot from Megumi's palm straight into the seal he was holding. Black light spread instantly, only to be slowly absorbed by the sapphire-blue eyes carved into the dragon's head. The dragon's gaze ignited, vivid and alive, as though a spirit had awakened within it; its eyes fixed upon the two

Special Grade sorcerers standing in opposition.

That gaze was stern, almost admonishing, like a divine reprimand. Yet moments later, a gentler glow filtered through the room, softening the severity, as though the god itself had taken pity on two insignificant mortals.

Then, suddenly, the sound of a dragon's cry rang out.

Sensing unfamiliar cursed energy, the dragon resisted, its roar filled with hostility. But just as quickly, it calmed- lulled by a familiar presence embedded deep within Megumi's technique. A trace of aura once entrusted by the previous clan head, lingering even now.

At last, the dragon yielded.

The cry faded into silence.

And with it, an ordinary wall within the study was wrenched aside by an unseen force, revealing a hidden door concealed behind it.

Megumi stared at the secret entrance that had opened before him, then turned back to look at Yuuta, whose expression now held a volatile mix of shock and fury.

Without urgency, Megumi stepped toward the doorway, leaving Yuuta with a final remark.

"The Gojo bloodline acknowledged me as the son of the previous clan head. As the rightful inheritor of this generation," he said calmly. "Do you really think you can stop me?"

As he spoke, Megumi pushed open the vermilion-and-gold-lacquered wooden door.

The door opened into the chamber where the treasures of generations of Gojo clan heads were kept.

The treasures of the Gojo clan.

And also -

his.

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When Gojo Satoru sleeps, he carries a softness of astonishing beauty. He inherits the ancient, overwhelming bloodline of the oldest clan in the Jujutsu world, and with the sky-blue brilliance of the Six Eyes in his possession, it is only natural that his appearance has always drawn the attention of others. Yet the powerful presence of a divine child that he cannot conceal, paired with that arrogant half-smile and the occasional gaze that fixes on someone as if piercing straight through their soul, comes together into a kind of beauty that feels almost invasive - like a pristine white leopard lounging freely across an endless plain. One can only admire from afar, stirred yet faintly fearful, not quite daring to step any closer.

Only when he sleeps do those sharp edges soften, worn down at last, returning him to the image of a gentle, beautiful cat.

Megumi remembers this clearly. He spent nearly ten years - from childhood into early adolescence - secretly watching him while he slept. Because Satoru was extraordinarily sensitive to cursed energy, Megumi only dared to look from afar, from the upper bunk bed he himself had insisted on having in the house. From that distance, his eyes traced the softness of Satoru’s hair, the straight bridge of his nose, then drifted down to his thin yet vividly colored lips, lingering quietly as if afraid the gaze itself might be noticed. He silently admired him with the innocent eyes of an eight-year-old looking at his newly arrived "foster father," then with the admiring gaze of a ten-year-old as his foster father began to demonstrate his sorcery to him, and finally with the longing gaze of a fourteen-year-old. That was his first wet dream, waking up startled with a sticky feeling in his lower body and the image of a breathtakingly beautiful Satoru leaning against him, whispering words of love and desire, inviting him to *take* him. Terrified by the forbidden dream, Megumi insisted to move into Jujutsu High's dormitory to get as far away from him as possible. But then so much happened: Geto Suguru returned, Sukuna appeared, and then another Kenjaku jumped in to compete for the Six Eyes. In the end, he still couldn't hide his primal desire from back then, the burning fire still raging whenever he thought of Satoru, the urge to find him, to free him, and to *possess* him.

Before going to confront Yuuta, Megumi had spent an entire week without sleep, forcing himself again and again to truly believe that the man had returned. Gojo Satoru had come back. He had left the Prison Realm behind, returned whole and unchanged, just as he was the last day they saw each other before that October.

The way Megumi discovered Satoru's existence, and Yuuta Okkotsu's plan, was almost absurdly accidental. When Yuuta came to him asking for help enhancing the projection effect of a special-grade illusion cursed tool, Megumi had left behind a fragment of residual awareness from the Divine General Mahoraga within the object. It wasn't intentional. Megumi had simply developed an unconscious habit of leaving a faint trace of cursed energy attuned to Satoru, one that would immediately report back to the master of the Ten Shadows the moment it encountered Satoru again. The habit had formed back when Megumi first began inheriting his technique, at first merely as a way to secretly watch Satoru. Later, after Satoru was sealed away, it hardened into an obsession - a silent prayer cast into the dark, searching for his return. He acted with no more than a one-in-a-thousand sliver of hope, merely seeking the familiar resonance of Satoru's unique cursed energy. Who could have known it would truly lead him to Satoru, now imprisoned by Yuuta within the gilded cage of the Gojo clan?

Megumi's fingers lingered over the special-grade cursed chain-turned-bracelet on Satoru's wrist, sensing the thin yet unyielding current of power wrapped tightly around the silver band. It bound and suppressed everything - cursed energy, physical prowess, technique alike - sealing away the strongest jujutsu sorcerer humanity had ever known. Under such a restriction, Satoru should have been reduced to little more than an ordinary man, his presence completely erased, impossible for Megumi's senses to find.

And yet, in those first days after being brought here, Satoru had resisted constantly - at least, that was what Yuuta had said. A restless, defiant cat stirring trouble, sending ripples through suppressed cursed energy just enough for Megumi to catch the faint breath of his existence. Enough to lead him here, to this very moment - where a living Satoru, still radiant, still full of life and beauty just as he had been in Megumi's childhood, lay cradled securely in his arms.

Megumi lowered his head and pressed a gentle kiss to the beautiful lips resting against his chest.

Suddenly, a sharp sting bited on his tounge

It turned out his kitten had woken up.

The white kitten stirred awake, opening wide those blue eyes to look at Megumi. Then, as if recognizing who stood before him, he stretched out soft hands to wrap around Megumi's neck, rubbing his face against

Megumi's still-bare shoulder left uncovered from the night before - docile and sweet, as though the mischievous creature who had bitten Megumi's lip moments earlier could not possibly be the same one. Lately, Satoru had stopped resisting. And because of that, the time the two of them - or rather, the *three* of them - spent together had grown warmer, gentler, with fewer arguments and far less coercion than in those first days.

That day, when Megumi confronted Yuuta and, by sheer luck, managed to activate the Gojo clan's ancestral hidden chamber, Yuuta had finally agreed to compromise and share Satoru with him. He was far from pleased. Megumi could clearly sense the gloom and killing intent around him, thickening like congealed frost. But what else could be done? It was better that only he knew, that Yuuta-and-Megumi stood beside Satoru, than to let the truth spread - drawing in countless others still searching for him, like Itadori, Sukuna, or some foolish foreign sorcerer. That was the reasoning Megumi used to convince himself as well, to restrain the young beast coiled in his chest, to keep it from shattering its restraints and lunging out to tear apart rivals, to seize the position of alpha and claim the Six Eyed for himself alone.

To keep Satoru, that day Megumi chose to lock away part of his greed, and persuaded Yuuta to hide a portion of his possessiveness in turn. Because neither of them, alone, could ever hope to protect the Six-Eyed of the Jujutsu world. But together - the two heirs of the biggest families - they could hold onto a Gojo Satoru stripped of cursed energy, placed within a gilded cage adorned with gold, cherished as a treasure beyond price.

The snow leopard, once imprisoned, had at first always turned its gaze toward freedom, eyes rimmed red, his resistance sharp and anything but gentle. Yet fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately to Satoru, an ancient clan that placed great importance on the propagation of bloodlines like the Zenin family truly knew how the game was played. Megumi had uncovered countless medicines and cursed tools, using them step by step to trim away those beautiful fangs, and in doing so, erase any remaining possibility of returning the leopard to the open forest.

The body of an ordinary person was never as strong as that of a sorcerer, let alone against a special-grade one. With a single, effortless motion, Megumi could restrain those slender wrists. At first, the beautiful arms only knew how to push away against his chest. Gradually, as layers upon layers of silver chains wrapped around

them, tightening control, resistance faded. In his place grew a learned instinct: to hook onto Megumi's shoulder, to seek sensation and warmth amid the moments when he offered his care.

Megumi loved Satoru like this - loved him in a way that allowed for gentleness, for careful tending. For he would swear upon all the cursed energy in this world that neither he nor Yuuta desired anything more than to immerse Satoru in affection upon affection, to pour love into him without end, as if to finally ease the three years of longing both of them had endured when they could not reach him.

From the day Satoru stopped resisting, he was no longer confined constantly within the hidden chamber of the Gojo clan head. Megumi prepared a small, old villa on the outer edge of the mountains owned by the Zenin family, a place once used as a seasonal retreat by the clan head, and laid a barrier veil around it to keep intruders away. The estate became a destination Megumi would occasionally bring Satoru to, on days when Satoru belonged to him alone.

The garden there was breathtaking. One side opened onto a gently sloping forest of peach trees in bloom; on the other, a clear stream ran softly year-round, sometimes carrying petals, pink and white alike, from the upper reaches, drifting down into the small pond before the villa. Megumi often had a long chair placed there, so he could hold Satoru in his arms and lie with him beneath a sky filled with falling blossoms. Flowers are, by nature, spring's most beautiful creation, but when they land upon the brilliant platinum hair of the Six Eyed, they become a backdrop that lends even greater splendor to that pale, almost translucent face. When he was in a good mood, Megumi would talk with Satoru about amusing moments from their days at Jujutsu High. At such times, Satoru would laugh openly, his beautiful eyes curving into soft crescents.

Satoru's smile had always been beautiful, Megumi had known that for a long time, but in these recent years, it was more captivating than ever before. The Satoru of the past smiled all the way to the bottom of his clear eyes, his laughter crisp and bright, like a warm beam of sunlight pouring straight into Megumi's heart. The Satoru of now carried a trace of indulgence in his gaze, tinting his smile with something captivating, something *inviting*.

At times, Megumi would become lost in that look, unable to restrain himself, overcome with desire, he had taken Satoru right there in the garden. Bare white skin, unhidden beneath the flowering sky, Satoru himself turning into a blushing blossom at the height of allure, shy yet

opening for Megumi alone in that moment. Megumi would trace each petal with his fangs and toungue, soft as velvet, coaxing the color deeper and brighter, until somewhere close by echoed the unrestrained, broken sounds drawn from the one in his arms.

He had done this - this sight - countless times since finding Satoru again, since finally having him. And yet every time he entered that body, Megumi felt both soul and flesh swell with an overwhelming satisfaction, realizing that his twenty-year-old self had at last fulfilled the dream he had carried six years ago. Sometimes, when desire crested too high, Megumi even had the illusion that his fourteen-year-old self was there as well - right here at the Zenin estate, beside the long chair steeped in the scent of passion - watching intently as the present him possessed the Six-Eyed, held their once untouchably distant foster father tightly at his side, stripped away that lofty, untouchable arrogance, and loved him until he had to part his lips and beg for mercy.

Only heaven knew that the more Satoru begged, the more fiercely Megumi claimed him.

It was only when white hair buried itself against his shoulder, clinging and pleading like a spoiled thing, that Megumi would finally be satisfied enough to release the blossom - soaked through, fragrant, and irresistibly sweet.

Speaking of clinging pleas: since the day Satoru was harshly punished by Megumi with a few *tricks* involving Zenin sexual cursed tools for daring to resist, he had learned how to become a docile little cat, one who also knew how to ask for Megumi and Yuuta's mercy. The trays of homemade sweets Yuuta used to prepare, only to have them discarded untouched before, had now become treats his kitten would toy with lovingly. The gentle caresses Megumi once offered and had been rejected were now welcomed of Satoru’s own accord; he had even learned the trick of rubbing lightly against Megumi’s chest, tickling his nerves until his body reacted despite itself.

Because of this, Megumi and Yuuta no longer confined the white cat within four dark walls. Their kitten needed sunlight. That was one reason this estate had been chosen, so Megumi could hold Satoru in his arms and watch ribbons of sunlight dance across the beautiful skin resting against his chest. At such moments, Satoru often buried his face into the hollow of Megumi’s shoulder, exposing the curve of his neck where marks of desire still lingered.

When they made love, both Megumi and Yuuta liked to leave traces upon Satoru's body, as though staking a claim, to convince themselves that this devine being had truly been stained with mortal dust by hands as ordinary as theirs. With his cursed energy sealed, Satoru's reversed technique was impaired, and so the kisses and bites left behind would take two or three days to fade.

Megumi's hand moved unconsciously, brushing over those teeth marks, the faint bruises glaring against pale skin. Unable to resist, he bent down to kiss them again, pushing Satoru back against the lounge chair, easily guessing what Megumi intended to begin.

This time, however, Satoru did not yield. He pushed Megumi away and spoke very softly:

"Yesterday you worked me so hard I'm still *full*, Megumi-kun… please spare Satoru just one day, is it okay?"

The request came out softened, carrying a hint of coaxing, almost pleading; the faint flush on his cheeks made Megumi's resolve melt at once. He let out a sigh, pretending reluctance, yet in the end still chose to grant mercy to his sweetly begging little kitten. He reached out to take Satoru's hand, about to pull him into his arms, only for the mischievous kitten to slip swiftly from the lounge chair to the ground, lifting those beautiful blue eyes to look up at him.

"Then… how about I use my mouth for you, Megumi-kun?"

Before Megumi could answer, Satoru had already moved between his legs, bending down to face the part of him he had long since grown familiar with. His kitten let his soft pink tongue slip out, pressing a kiss through the fabric outside, soaking it with his saliva. Teeth tugged at the zipper, freeing the monster imprisoned behind damp cloth, then guiding it into another cagem, warm and yielding, allowing it to ravage and seek as it pleased. As his own member went deeper into this hot cavern, the only things Megumi could see were white hair trembling lightly and the broken sounds caught and stifled in Satoru's throat.

This was not the first time Satoru had taken the initiative to tend to him, yet no matter how many times it happened, Megumi truly loved this sight: loved Gojo Satoru kneeling obediently on the grass, letting Megumi thread his fingers into his hair, letting him claim that warm, beautiful mouth, letting his lips coil around his. As if the God of the Jujutsu world had surrendered to the devil's temptation, sinking into

desire with no path of escape.

It was unclear how deeply the Six Eyed had sunk into that trance; only that the devil - Megumi himself, at this very moment, could no longer rein himself in: he wanted more, ever more. Megumi grasped the back of his neck and gave a gentle push, urging his member to surge faster and deeper into the cavern, until the walls of Satoru's mought responded by instinct, tightening around it. Satoru's stifled sobs grew louder with the quickening rhythm. Afraid of hurting him, Megumi soothed him with his free hand, lightly stroking the line of a jaw that must have gone numb from the strain. One hand was brutal in its grip, holding fast to conquer; the other was tender, caressing, so that Satoru seemed to tremble with pleasure even before Megumi had truly touched the sensitive points of his body. The shiver of skin beneath his fingers, coupled with the sounds pouring into his ears, only sharpened the hunger; Megumi pressed on, control slipping away. At that moment, his kittensoft paws lifted to cradle the balls, stroking in a way that sent a sudden rush of pleasure through him.

"Satoru, Satoru," he murmured, looking down into those tear-bright eyes that nonetheless persevered in pleasing their master. The motion grew frantic, breathless, until at the final instant he cried out "Satoru," clutched the silver hair tight, and let the pleasure spill into his kitten's mouth, now hold in his arms. Exactly before he reached his orgasm, pain flared sharply at the nape of his neck.

The pain came without warning. It was clearly no more than a third-grade cursed attack, yet because it struck at the very instant he was exposed and unguarded, his whole body went numb and collapsed. Megumi couldn't move at all; cursed energy seemed to withdraw from him at once, leaving Megumi to fall back onto the chaise, able only to watch as Satoru - who moments before had still been flushed with desire - now looked at him with eyes utterly clear. Anger mingled with hurt flickered over that gaze for a heartbeat or two, before it was decisively averted, the slim figure of Gojo Satoru turning and fleeing into the dense woods beyond the garden.

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To be continue.

Chapter 3: Satoru | Run Away

Gojo Satoru had never run this fast in his life.

Born with an overwhelming reserve of cursed energy inherited from the Gojo clan, blessed with the Six Eyes that granted its bearer a naturally superior mastery of physical combat, he had never, even as a child, bothered to train something as trivial as stamina That was the sort of thing ordinary people worried about - ordinary sorcerers, even. From childhood, Satoru had relied on the Six Eyes to carry him through everything.

Now, nearly thirty years into his life, he truly wished he could go back and grab the six- or seven-year-old Satoru by the collar and force that arrogant brat to train properly, to give his body even a little more stamina. He had never imagined that his physical prowess depended so completely on the Six Eyes, now sealed by the silver band still cinched tight around his wrist, leaving him feeling unbearably weak.

His bare feet struck gravel as he ran, sharp stones biting into his skin with each step. Pain flared, raw and immediate. His chest felt on the verge of bursting from the strain, as though his breath might give out at any moment. Sweat spilled from his temples, and God help him, Gojo Satoru hated sweat more than most things in this world.

But he could not stop.

Just a little more. Just a little more, he repeated to himself.

If he could reach the outer edge of the curtain Megumi had cast around the estate, if he could just break through it, the boy would no longer be able to track the residue of his cursed energy, no longer able to trace the destination of his teleportation. He could escape this enormous cage.

Satoru had imagined this escape countless times, though he no longer remembered when it began. Perhaps a year and a half ago. Perhaps a year. Perhaps only six months. Since being released from the Prison Realm, time had lost its meaning. People cared about dates because they still believed in the future. Because they expected tomorrow to come. For Satoru, there were moments when he wished he would never wake upon again. If he did not wake up, he would not feel the naked vulnerability of losing Infinity’s protection. If he did not wake up, he would not have to endure Yuta and Megumi's *obsessions* night

after night, without end. If he did not wake up, he would not have to watch his favorite student and his adopted son fall so far there was no saving them.

Half-conscious, half-delirious, there were times he fainted in Yuta's or Megumi's arms - ridiculously enough, that the Six Eyes could be reduced to senselessness by sex, and woke up to black hair brushing his cheek.

Amid the dull ache of a sleepless night's aftermath, Satoru would sometimes awaken in confusion, unable to tell what day or year it was, wondering whether he truly had been forced by his own students after becoming the strongest, after becoming a teacher at Jujutsu High. Or whether all of it was nothing more than a dream.

Perhaps the lock of black hair against his cheek belonged to someone else.

To *him*.

Suguru.

Perhaps they were still together, still standing in the brightest years of their youth, and he still had the chance to hold him, to keep him, before he slipped away forever.

A bitterness so sharp it stole his breath would rise in Satoru's chest. Whenever he thought of that person, the feeling always came, and he would reach for sweets, clinging to the delusion that artificial sweetness on the tongue might smooth over the ache buried inside his heart.

But at this moment, he did not even have that false sweetness.

There was only someone turning toward him, just long enough for him to realize that this hair was far too short, before pressing him down into forced kisses, forced tenderness - things he had long since learned to accept with closed eyes, no longer bothering to open them to see whether it was Yuta or Megumi are having him.

Between Yuuta and Megumi, at first Satoru thought Yuuta was marginally better than the child he had once raised. Of course, neither of those ruined boys could truly be called good.

One of them had forced that special-grade cursed bracelet onto him, sealing his Six Eyes once again, then imprisoned him inside the hidden

chamber of Satoru's own clan - funny enough, that very chamber recognized its master by cursed energy alone, the thing he had been stripped of. The other arrived later, offering him the faintest, most fragile sliver of hope for escape- only to crush it utterly by walking the same merciless path, step by step forcing Satoru to submission.

Still, in those earliest days, Yuuta was at least gentler in bed.

During the first year of confinement, Satoru had been furious with him, never granting him even a trace of tenderness, no matter how much Yuuta pleaded or coerced. Satoru remembered - afterward, sometimes, Yuuta would hold him and ramble about old stories. Then he would cry. Warm tears would slide down Yuuta's cheek and drip onto Satoru's face, pressed helplessly close. *Very few people had ever cried for him,* Satoru thought distantly. Even Suguru—had *Suguru ever cared enough to shed tears for him?* But why did it matter, he thought bitterly. *The one who cried for him loved him wrongly, and the one he loved… Suguru had never made him a priority in their life.*

Satoru had never truly considered what Yuuta did to be tenderness. At its core, it was still force, still coercion. Until Megumi appeared.

For the first time, Satoru genuinely questioned every decision of his own life: whether the seventeen-year-old Gojo Satoru had been unbearably reckless when he took that boy in, raising him beneath his wings. Only for that child to return, wielding his intimate understanding of Satoru to shatter those very wings. Fushiguro Megumi - or rather, Zenin Megumi now - understood Gojo Satoru completely. And precisely because of that, Zenin Megumi could, with frightening ease, peel away layer after layer of the hardened defenses surrounding the Six Eyes — defenses that Yuuta, for an entire year, had never quite had the heart to break.

Never quite had the heart, Satoru realized - because it was only after Megumi provoked and incited him, pushing the brutality of possession he called love onto Satoru's body, that Satoru understood: What Yuuta had done to him for that entire year had, in comparison, been painfully gentle.

Within the Three Great Families, a few "interesting amusements" techniques had long circulated between clan heads as whispered lore - after all, a family needed descendants in abundance to secure its lineage. In those years of curious youth, Naoya would occasionally recount such things to him during the rare moments when the two of them were not trying to beat each other bloody. Satoru simply never

imagined that one day, those very "techniques' would be used on him - by the child he had raised with his own hands.

If the relationship between the Gojo and Zenin clans was built upon the sharing of cursed tools, and the alliance between the Kamo and Gojo clans upon marriage ties between gifted bloodlines to expand their heritage, then the bond between the Zenin and Kamo clans was more peculiar still. They exchanged techniques and cursed medicines through a shared indulgence of their former heads across generations:

Sex.

Naoya once told him that, according to legend, there existed a secret cursed drug - a fusion of aphrodisiac herbs grown on Zenin lands and a trace of the Kamo clan's blood-manipulation technique, creating a compound meant solely for coercion and control. Whoever drank it would be dragged into overwhelming sexual desire, bound entirely to the will of the one who created the drug, and could find release only with the person whose blood had been designated at the drug's creation. Refusal came at a price: absolute torment of mind: the mind would be trapped in hallucinations, reliving the most sorrowful days of one's life in an endless loop, until the psyche shattered and surrendered.

When Naoya finished telling the story, Satoru had clicked his tongue, idly wondering just how much pain it would take for someone to abandon their dignity so completely. Only now, after experiencing it himself, did he understand that the cursed drug's reputation was well deserved, especially when inflicted upon the body of an ordinary human stripped of even a single thread of cursed energy.

Because Satoru had truly surrendered. Resistance vanished, dissolving into acceptance, into compliance.

By instinct, Satoru still recoiled from the breath of cursed energy when any powerful sorcerer other than *him* drew close, but the toruture forced him to unclench the fist he had tightened with all his strength, to stop pushing Megumi away. Instead, his fingers curved faintly, catching the hem of Megumi's clothing, a vague and complicit allowance of the invasion, teeth clenched as he begged Megumi to be gentle with him.

Because the despair induced by the cursed drug was truly unbearable. It forced him to relive - hundreds, thousands of times - the day *Suguru* left him, and then the night beneath a full moon when

Satoru himself had killed Suguru with his own hands.

Megumi was cruel enough to manipulate the drug's hallucinations further, so that when he and Yuuta took Satoru together, the scene before Satoru's eyes became that same dark alley once more. Only three steps away lay Suguru, gravely wounded. And here Satoru was hold by waist on the ground, restrained by his own student and adopted son, being *taken*.

Three steps apart.

And yet he could not drag this body - marred and smeared with the marks of sex - over to Suguru's side.

Satoru thought in a flash of desperation - He doesn't care if he's always been tainted. Anything was fine, as long as he could touch Suguru just once more.

But the figure before him blurred and faded amid Yuuta's and Megumi's relentless movements, their forced claiming of his body swallowing everything else.

Satoru truly wanted to faint. Truly did faint from heartbreak - only to realize, when consciousness slipped away, that reality returned.

He was here.

On a crimson velvet bed.

Like a beautiful doll, imprisoned within the hidden chamber of the Gojo clan.

There were times when Satoru found himself wondering which was more painful: To stand before Suguru with a body already ruined beyond recognition, or to exist within a reality of captivity, with no knowledge of when freedom might ever return?

Yet, mercifully, when suffering reaches its extreme, sweetness is said to follow. The cursed drug was brutal, empowered by the Kamo clan's Blood Manipulation, but it was also precisely because two drops of blood from both Megumi and Yuuta had entered his body that his curse energy instincts quietly discovered a path of survival. His body learned to siphon the thinnest trace of cursed energy from within, just enough to loosen the silver bain's restraint around his wrist.

The first time Satoru realized he could once again command even a

single thread of cursed energy, however faint, was when Yuuta carried him out of the Gojo estate, riding a cursed spirit toward Megumi's villa. By then, Satoru had complied with them for some time. In exchange, he received Megumi's tenderness and a form of freedom Yuuta permitted- though always within the boundaries of their control.

Satoru disliked flying, but he would always hide his fear of heights behind dark glasses, occasionally wrapping himself in Infinity just to feel safe. Even after losing his cursed energy for so long, his body moved on instinct, trying to activate that protective barrier once more. And unexpectedly, for a single second, he truly felt it, a spark of cursed energy responding within him.

His body went rigid in shock. Yuuta, ever sensitive to the smallest change in him, immediately bent down. "Sensei? What's wrong?"

The survival instinct of a cornered beast snapped into place. Satoru withdrew that fragile thread of cursed energy at once, before Yuuta could notice anything amiss. He buried his face weakly against Yuuta's chest, forcing out a soft, clinging tone that disgusted even himself.

"Yuuta exhausted me too much yesterday," he murmured. "Could you fly a little slower today?"

Yuuta did not doubt him for even a moment. He only laughed, fingers idly tracing the bite marks still swollen and sore, left behind last night - no, from the entirety of yesterday. The familiar stimulation made Satoru's body tremble against his will. Only Satoru knew that beneath the desire his body betrayed so easily, his heart had already gone utterly cold.

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Gradually, Satoru managed to pin down the method for activating that pitifully small fragment of cursed energy within himself: There were three conditions - each necessary, together sufficient - for him to be able to use it.

First: the owner of at least one of the two blood droplets from the cursed drug inside his body had to be aroused. Only then would the

control exerted by the drug fluctuate strongly enough to loosen a sliver of the silver band's seal.

Second: his own body had to be in adequate physical condition. This requirement was far more difficult to quantify, given that he had no reliable way to measure his health at any given moment, especially under the constant, meticulous *takings* of both Yuuta and Megumi. Fortunately, prolonged observation revealed a pattern. On the rare occasions he managed to regain access to cursed energy, his body had not yet been utterly worn down by sex. The optimal window appeared to be after being forcibly submerged in sexual activity for at least eight or nine hours, and better still if it was right after waking up, when his body had recovered somewhat during sleep.

Third: the amount of cursed energy he could sustain was minuscule, and the duration never exceeded thirty minutes. At best, it was enough to knock aside a stone no larger than his fist - tests he had conducted in secret during the times Yuuta and Megumi allowed him to wander alone in the rear garden of the villa. The quantity was so negligible that neither of them noticed whether it was truly cursed energy being used, or merely a fluctuation of the cursed drug within his body.

Enough for a single, ordinary physical strike. Enough, perhaps, for one short-range use of teleportation - nothing too far. Satoru ran the calculations quietly in his mind, his gaze lifting toward the sky that arched over the endless forest stretching across the Zenin estate.

Only now did Satoru realize that the absurd friendship he had maintained throughout middle school with that brat Naoya had, in the end, possessed real value after all. Had he not listened to those stories back then, his fragile, ordinary human eyes at present might never have perceived the truth: the endless, overlapping mountain ranges outside the villa were nothing but an illusion. He might have surrendered simply at the sight of such vastness, convinced escape was impossible. Fortunately, this space lay behind the Zenin mountains, contained within a radius of roughly two kilometers centered on the villa, fully enclosed by the domain curtain of the Zenin head. It was a place designed for indulgent games or secret gatherings of the clan. As long as he could run beyond the curtain, he would be free of the Zenin head’s control - able to quietly erase traces of cursed energy and use teleportation to disappear from this place entirely.

Two kilometers meant over ten minutes of running. Nearly fifteen, if one accounted for a body abused far beyond its limits.

That meant Satoru had fifteen minutes to seize this once-in-a-lifetime chance.

He had imagined countless scenarios in his mind, running calculations in silence, weighing which path would be the most optimal. He could lure both Yuuta and Megumi to him, then activate cursed energy at the peak of their arousal and flee. Or he could take advantage of the moment Yuuta brought him here, escaping before Megumi, the owner of the curtain, arrived.
There were other possibilities too. He had weighed them all, over and over. The first option carried the risk that his hopeless cursed energy would not be enough to neutralize both Yuuta and Megumi at once. The second made it impossible to control the distance between himself and Megumi, leaving open the danger that the Ten Shadows Technique might track the residual traces of his cursed energy.

In the end, Satoru chose this path.

On the days that belonged solely to Megumi - because yes, those two brats had truly sat down and divided his schedule, deciding when he belonged to whom, and when he would be taken by both of them at once - he would wait until Yuuta was far enough away to be unable to interfere.

Then he would lure Megumi alone, without dragging himself fully into the act - and strike precisely at the peak of his foster son's climax, executing the escape he had planned so carefully.

A few years ago, even if someone offered him gold, Satoru would never have believed that, besides to Suguru, he would one day willingly use his mouth to serve someone else.

Even if it was for the sake of escape, Satoru thought bitterly. He had always been at ease with sex. And Suguru had always loved control in bed. So the long, impulsive nights of their youth usually began with Satoru lying there, letting Suguru have his way with him; and they ended with his entire body restrained by the Crimson Dragon curse, while Suguru took him again and again. Perhaps every high school boy had once dreamed of their lover kneeling for them, perhaps Suguru had too. But Satoru never showed that he enjoyed such things, so the other never forced him. Still, he had known how. He had done it, on those rare nights when emotions overflowed, when even the Six Eyes was moved enough to lower himself and serve a mortal.

And yet now, here he was, the one who took the initiative to invite

Megumi. He knew exactly what kind of desire the image would stir: a god kneeling on the grass, obedient, looking up with eyes reddened at the corners. So he accepted that posture, kneeling there, gentle and docile like a small kitten begging for mercy. Perhaps only Satoru knew that the redness at the corners of his eyes was not from arousal at all. It was because, in one fleeting second- when Megumi gently rubbed his jaw to ease the ache - Satoru saw an reality flowing into a distant past. Megumi’s figure layered with Suguru's , from those distant days when he, too, had once been this gentle with him. The illusion of a familiar tenderness, now impossibly far away, made his eyes burn hot.

But it passed in an instant.

He steadied himself quickly, resolute, waiting for the moment to strike - crude, raw cursed energy, but decisive.

When Megumi fell, staring after him with eyes emptied of strength and filled with despair, Satoru felt his chest tighten painfully for a heartbeat.

Then he turned away.

He ran with everything he had, straight toward the other side of the barrier.

Just a little more, and he would be free.

Naoya had once told him that the natural boundary surrounding the estate was a shallow stream. Between ragged breaths, Satoru strained his ears, catching the faint sound of flowing water somewhere ahead. The sound was close now - so close. He threw his remaining strength forward, fixing an address and a familiar spatial image firmly in his mind. The second place he would choose when searching for refuge, not the obvious first option, but a quieter one, secret enough that few people knew of it.

Just a few more steps.

One… two…

He counted to force himself onward.

And three -

White hair vanished just before the barrier flared with furious light,

before the stream was swallowed by countless shikigami shadows and a special-grade cursed spirit.

He had made it.

He had escaped in time.

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Satoru shifted slightly beneath the pure white quilt, the sensation of his entire body slowly relaxing as his back sank deeper into the soft mattress. *Relaxing,* it was a feeling he had not truly felt in a very long time, long before Shibuya, long before Sukuna and those accursed fingers ever appeared. Even on the very first day he made it here, he still could not remember how one was supposed to relax. That first night, after finding the spare key and letting himself inside, he had locked every door without hesitation, then curled up in the darkest corner of the living room, staring fixedly at the entrance as if guarding against some unseen predator - one he would be powerless to fight if it appeared. He sat there for a long time. At some point, he drifted off without realizing it, and when he woke again, morning light was already filling the room.

Daylight fell gently over the small apartment, warming its white-dominated interior. Only then did he finally have the chance to truly look at the place, to take in what its owner had left behind. A simple sofa stood beside a bookshelf. On the table, there was still a bottle of essential oil, not yet fully dried. The scent had faded, but when Satoru leaned closer, the familiar fragrance still lingered. It was the same scent he used to smell on the owner of this home.

So that was it, fragrance layered into space, not worn as perfume. No wonder it soaked into skin but barely clung to clothes.

Drawn by the familiar stimulus, Satoru followed the faint trail of scent into the small bedroom, just as simple as the outer room. He gathered his courage and buried his face into the white quilt, letting his whole body sink into that familiar feeling. And then he fell asleep - truly asleep - for the first time in more than two years.

By now, three weeks had passed since he arrived. The first few days were filled with fear of being found, but he kept telling himself that

the thin trace of cursed energy beyond the barrier was far too faint to be tracked here. Besides, they would never think of this place, he reasoned. Gradually, the fear eased. He hid more calmly, relaxing little by little inside this safe nest.

The apartment had been fully paid for long ago. Utility bills were permanently deducted from a bottomless sorcerer's bank account, so everything continued to run smoothly. Only food required a bit of planning, but that, too, turned out to be simple. Rummaging through the desk drawer, he found a white phone. It didn't take long to charge it and unlock it using his birthday as the passcode. This phone had once been meant for him by the owner of the apartment - an offer he had refused back then. Now, like something returning to where it belonged, it had found its way back into his hands.

With a working phone, he could order ingredients and cook for himself. He still didn't have the courage to walk the streets again, to risk being found by those two. Thankfully, while the dishes he knew how to make were few, they weren't bad, more than enough to get a person through three meals a day. Deliveries usually came every three days. Today was another delivery day, and Satoru found himself waking earlier than usual, eager to receive it, because this order included a new kind of matcha cake. Only one, and only that. A rare luxury he allowed himself while on the run. Even now, as he waited, a small, quiet happiness rose inside him with each passing minute.

A knock sounded at the door.

Satoru slipped out from under the quilt at once and headed toward the door, light-hearted. In just a few weeks, he had become vaguely familiar with the delivery boy here, who is a gentle kid who still blushed when he saw him, who couldn't quite meet his eyes whenever Satoru teased him. He usually rang the bell once, then waited obediently outside, ears turning red as he stood there waiting for Satoru.

Satoru chuckled at the image forming in his mind.

Then, suddenly, his steps stopped.

He realized the sound just now had been a knock.

Not the familiar doorbell.

Someone else was here.

And by some vague instinct, he knew - it wouldn’t be anyone good.

Satoru took a deep breath, then slipped back into the shadows, eyes fixed on the silhouette beyond the door like a cornered beast watching its hunter.

Chapter 4: Satoru | Trapped

Satoru was pinned hard against the mattress by a chain of cursed energy, bound so tightly that he could not move at all. The cursed energy was applied with exquisite precision, heavy enough to immobilize his limbs against the bed, yet controlled carefully so it exerted no unnecessary pressure on any other part of his body. His arms and legs were completely neutralized, his eyes were also covered with a strip of red silk, severing his last remaining sense of orientation. Every crucial sense was under control.

If, in the past, Satoru had worn a blindfold of his own will to lessen the strain that Six Eyes left upon himself, then now when his body stripped of cursed energy to resist, the absence of light became unbearable, the pressure building higher and higher inside his skull.

He did not know where he was; the only things he knew were this: pleasure and pain were tangled together, flooding every sensation he had. He could feel his entire body, inside and out, burning hot under the influence of the cursed drug. The two droplets of blood from Yuuta and Megumi embedded within the drug behaved like mischievous children, choosing his body as the stage for a vicious act of revenge against the world - even without the Six Eyes to track the flow of cursed energy, Satoru could sense the movement of those two drops with terrifying clarity. They raced through him, competing inside his body; sometimes surging through his veins like a violent storm, sometimes turning cruel, gathering at a single sensitive point, striking it again and again until his entire body trembled uncontrollably.

First, his ear. It burned, as if a warm, wet mouth had closed around it, licking and teasing. Then the sensation flowed down to his neck, circling the junction where neck met nape, just beneath the ear, setting his whole body aflame with heat. Then it slid lower, inch by inch, reaching the base of his spine. There, it lingered - playing, tormenting - forcing Satoru to arch his body instinctively in a futile attempt to escape the overwhelming stimulation. As if they knew every sensitive place on him. Worse still, they worked together, doubling their precision, conquering each weak spot on his body with ruthless coordination. His toes curled in defiance, as though resisting this forced pleasure. But this was no ordinary teasing. Satoru had the distinct sense that the places touched by the cursed drug were not merely parts of his body, but as if it were pressing directly against the

most fragile points of his soul itself. The desire it created was unbearable, uncontrollable, driving him to crave contact with some other cool, solid skin - anything - to release himself. He felt like a shard of ice suddenly hurled into a barren desert, desperately seeking release before melting completely, before dissolving into liquid and *wetting helplessly* beneath someone else's playful hands.

The growing wetness drove him mad. He thrashed, struggling to escape, but the more he moved, the more his skin rubbed against the bedsheets. Silk of the finest quality, once luxuriously smooth, now felt malicious, enveloping him, stroking him, coaxing him - forcing him toward the brink, as if demanding he let out a moan in surrender. His entire body was taut with stimulation, aching for release. It felt as though even releasing the smallest sound, a single, soft moan even, might be enough to soothe him.

But he couldn't. No, Satoru reminded himself. Even if he was pushed to the edge, even if this was the end of the road, he had to keep at least this much - the last shred of dignity he had left.

He had been bound here for a long time now, or perhaps only a short while - tt was impossible for him to tell the time now. Torture stretched every fragment of time until each moment felt like a thousand years. When Megumi brought him here, he had issued the order in fury, commanding the cursed drug to stimulate him to its absolute limit. Wave after wave of pleasure descended without pause, without mercy, without release - an unbroken punishment. His flesh, toyed with by the blood droplets controlling it, flushed red with heat. His body moved without permission, rubbing desperately against anything within reach in search of comfort, yet the more it rubbed, the deeper the craving grew, because there was no escape from the drug's pleasure unless one of the blood's owners touched him. Satoru felt two contradictory currents flowing through him. On one side, he was swollen with stimulation, driven toward release; on the other, he felt hollow - an aching emptiness, as though something *big* was missing, something that needed to *fill him* to release the burning, damp void inside him.

In the rare moments of clarity he managed to claw back from the torment, he could hear Megumi and Yuuta taking turns entering the room to look at him. His beloved student and his cherished adopted son would rotate shifts every few hours, taking turns sitting in a chair in the room, watching him writhe in resistance. Satoru could vaguely tell when one replaced the other by scent alone - and damn it, that recognition existed only because of the months of coercion he had

already endured. He could feel their gazes resting on his naked body, burning as if they wanted to peel him apart again and again, until nothing remained but his fragile soul. Those looks were so tangible that the bite marks left behind from the times they had taken him before began to heat up, flaring hot against his skin. Sensation surged backward through his nerves like electricity, layering yet another stratum of torture, interwoven tightly with pleasure, onto his body.

At times, they would speak while keeping watch, but as if bound by some unspoken, cruel agreement set between them, neither of them would touch him. Only their voices filled the space around him: Yuuta's soft murmuring, gentle and coaxing; Megumi's low, firm, unwavering tone. Satoru had the distinct impression that they were like two fallen angels tempting him to step off the gates of heaven, each assigned a different role - one forcing, one soothing - working together to bend him into submission. The one who played the tyrant came first, torturing him to the brink, to the point where surrender felt inevitable, where falling seemed almost merciful. Then the one who played the comforter would appear, offering him a thin sliver of light at the end of the path, coaxing him to let go. And yet, alongside that gentleness, a cage was already descending around him, silent, invisible, leaving him no path of escape. No matter how sweet the whispers, no matter how tender the murmurs, the truth was the same for both the tyrant and the comforter: possession and control. They wanted him to submit. They wanted him to carry their claim on his body forever.

Of the two, Yuuta spoke more often.

"Is it very uncomfortable, Satoru?" He would ask like that, in a voice so soft and intimate that, if someone did not witness with their own eyes the fact that Satoru was their prisoner - bound, forced into a haze of sex by cursed drugs - they might easily mistake them for lovers lost in sweetness.

And when Satoru failed to answer, Yuuta would ask again. This time, his voice grew even gentler, tinged with the wounded tone of a large dog afraid of being abandoned, nudging closer to its master as he murmured: "If you don't answer… does that mean you don't love me anymore, Satoru?"

It wasn't that Satoru didn't want to answer; it was that he couldn't. His teeth were clenched tight, jaw locked to keep even the smallest, shameful moan from slipping free. If he weren't so afraid of making that sound of surrender, he would have told his once-beloved student

clearly: *No. I have never loved you. Wake up.*

Wake up, Yuuta, he whispered, or perhaps begged, inside his own head. But no words could escape, because Yuuta seemed to be drawing closer, his warm breath and body heat ghosting over Satoru's skin while he remained resolutely untouched. The cursed drug inside him seemed to go mad under that forced denial, arousal pushed to frenzy by restraint. Satoru curled his legs instinctively, trying to rub against anything for relief, but the special-grade curse Yuuta had set to guard him pinned him in place, forcing the back of his body to draw tight, burning so sharply it nearly brought tears to his eyes.

After a while, when Satoru still did not respond, Yuuta left, and Megumi came.

Megumi's arrival was quieter, gentler in motion, yet far more vivid in Satoru's awareness. Perhaps it was the ten years they had spent together that made Megumi's presence so unmistakable - every breath familiar, every shift easy to imagine. Satoru could almost see it: Megumi leaning lazily against an armchair, eyes fixed on him, watching him ache.

Megumi had always possessed a persistence that bordered on obsession. From the day Satoru first brought him home, through the years when he learned to command the Ten Shadows, that stubbornness had never faded. There was a time when Satoru himself had felt a quiet pride watching that effort - something Satoru lacked, something he never saw in that Zenin brat, Naoya. He once believed that Megumi's persistence would carry his talent far, perhaps even beyond the power of the Six Eyes. He had never imagined that one day, that same relentlessness would be turned against him. That the boy would apply it with brutal devotion to breaking him - forcing him, inch by inch, to bow and submit.

If someone had asked Satoru, before being captured in the prison Realm, whether he had ever noticed Yuuta's and Megumi's feelings, he likely wouldn't have known how to answer. He was an easygoing person in life, but when it came to love, he was stubborn in his own way, unwilling to let go of the past. Still, it wasn't as if he failed to notice the changes in how his students treated him: a gaze that lingered too long on his face, a head leaning against his shoulder on a plane under the pretense of sleep, a hand that seemed accidental as it circled a waist it had no reason to touch. He noticed them easily - those tender, unformed feelings - because he himself had once lived through a youth filled with trembling affection for *that person*. He had

thought of it as something vague, something born of their youth, something that would fade with time.

He never expected Shibuya to happen. He never expected to be sealed away for an entire year, never expected so much loss to follow. One catastrophe bled into another like filthy floodwater, splashing over the students he had once sheltered so carefully, dragging them down into the black mire of twisted desire. By the time he understood what had happened, it was already too late. One of them - Yuuta - had been blinded by love to the point of imprisoning himself, then imprisoning Satoru as well, inside a fantasy of love that never truly existed. The other - Megumi - knew, with brutal clarity, that he would never be chosen, and so forced Satoru to yield instead.

Former or latter, it was hard to say whom was more unforgivable. But perhaps the one that hurt him most was Megumi. The boy who had walked beside him for so long, only to turn around one day, the wolf pup suddenly sinking his teeth into Satoru's throat, dragging him back into his own territory. Tormented by the scorching, desperate sexuality of the cursed drug, and by the heartbreak of betrayal that cut just as deep, Satoru felt himself finally reach the limit, like a piece of snow cast into an endless desert, melting into a stagnant puddle, then drying up completely.

And then-

He couldn't feel anything.

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When he woke up again, he was lying on a small bed. The blindfold had been removed. The chains of cursed energy restraining his limbs were gone as well, though the silver bracelet sealing his technique was still firmly in place. Satoru let his gaze drift around the room. It was a cramped space, only a few square meters wide: a bed, a desk, a small window. At first, he couldn't tell where he was; then his eyes fell on the photograph resting on the desk - a painfully familiar image, taken during his first mission with *Suguru* in Osaka. The dormitory of Jujutsu High, he realized.

This was his old dorm room.

The place where, for two whole years, he and Suguru had crowded together on this narrow bed to read comics, watch movies, waste time side by side. He tried to sit up, to swing his legs off the bed and understand why he had been brought here, but before his feet could touch the floor, a powerful arm wrapped around his waist and yanked him backward, pulling him down onto the lap of someone behind him. Something *warm and big* - something unmistakable - pressed against him, scorching hot.

The touch made him gasp in surprise. But his body, too familiar with the owner of that heat, adapted far too quickly. A moan slipped from his throat before he could stop it. The sound was like striking flint, making the person behind him lost control instantly. The hand on his waist slid elsewhere: one hand reached forward to seize the sensitive buds on his chest, kneading them with deliberate malice, while the other traveled downward, probing insistently at the heat between his legs. Satoru tried to push him away, but another pair of hands appeared, grabbing his wrists and hauling his arms up above his head. The strong grip restraining him was then replaced by a rougher, uglier hand, one he knew all too well from the remnants of Rika, holding him firmly in place, wrists bound overhead.

His legs were forced apart by the second person, creating a clear path for the first hand to slide *inside*. The sudden invasion, pleasure colliding with humiliation and pain, nearly drew tears from his eyes. But whether he wanted it or not, the long months of relentless *sexual* conditioning betrayed him. His body responded on its own, opening, yielding, accommodating the familiar intrusion. His body trembled, heat pooling and rising into an ache that demanded more, more, more.

When one of them felt how tightly Satoru's body clung to his fingers - how honestly it responded - a soft laugh sounded behind him. Low. Controlled. A laugh that carried both burning desire and the cold restraint so characteristic of its owner. It crawled along Satoru's spine, leaving numbness in its wake.

Megumi, Satoru thought. He barely had time to register it before Megumi withdrew his fingers sharply. At the same moment, the curse under Yuuta's control lifted Satoru's body just enough to give leverage, and Megumi seized his hips and pulled him down hard.

Satoru's body swallowed the blazing heat, *long and huge*, in one brutal motion, from his adopted---

No, not the adopted son he once knew.

It's the head of the Zenin clan now.

Zenin Megumi.

The sudden movement forced his back to arch, bending like a young branch bowing under heaven's rain. The two burning drops of blood, soothed by such intimate proximity to one of the drug's masters, seemed to cheer inside his body, igniting the contact between them into raw, ravenous heat. Each relentless thrust sent stimulation crashing through him; pinned in a position with nothing to brace against, gravity itself seemed to aid Megumi, driving every movement deeper, *fuller*.

Satoru struggled against the curse's grip, his body instinctively trying to crawl away, to flee - but an arm reached out from behind and seized his ankle, fixing his hips in place so the thrusts could continue without mercy. His attempt to escape appeared to anger Megumi. Fingers dug painfully into Satoru's waist, the grip tightening until it hurt. Sensing its master's emotion, the cursed drug surged, gathering around the bruising pressure, licking at it from the inside. Then, suddenly, he felt something wet against his skin.

Satoru jolted and turned his head just enough to see Yuuta bending down, pressing kisses to the place Megumi had just released, trailing his mouth in a slow line up Satoru's spine. He bit deliberately, teeth dragging with cruel intent along the vulnerable hollow of Satoru's lower back. The curse's restraining hand was replaced by an extension of the silver cursed tool, lengthening into restraints that bound Satoru's wrists behind his back, leaving him completely at Yuuta's mercy.

Where Megumi behind him was wild and relentless, Yuuta in front was all false tenderness - stroking Satoru's back, his neck, lingering at the thin skin of his nape. Hot breath washed over that fragile place as Yuuta leaned close and whispered into his ear:

"Do you like it, Satoru? Do your students make love to you better than the bastard who used to take you here, Satoru?"

Suguru's name made Satoru go rigid. His body drew in on itself by instinct, and the reaction only drove Megumi to grow more brutal. Satoru turned his head to the side, trying to escape Yuuta's poisonous whisper, eyes squeezed shut, as if simply avoiding it might erase the thought of *him*, wash Satoru clean of the filth of being forced here by

his own students.

His reaction seemed to displease Yuuta. Yuuta seized his jaw, stopping him from turning away, then abruptly tore him out of Megumi's grasp and shifted him into a position even more humiliating than before. Satoru was made to straddle Yuuta's lap, legs spread, his softened back pressed against Yuuta's chest, facing the open doorway, while Yuuta replaced Megumi behind him, thrusting into him without mercy.

Megumi slipped in between Satoru's legs, beginning to scatter kisses along his tender thighs until they bloomed red and raw. From where Satoru was forced to look, through eyes blurred with tears drawn out by relentless torment, he could see Megumi's dark hair buried between his legs, hands gripping his powerless calves.

The door in front of him stood wide open. Sunlight spilled into the room, bright and merciless. It flickered with the wind outside, and flickered again in Satoru's vision as Yuuta's thrusts shattered his focus over and over. Then the light was suddenly blocked.

Footsteps approached. The realization struck like ice down his spine. Panic surged; he wanted to curl inward, to hide beneath the covers, but the three-way lock of their bodies held him immobile, pinned in place. The sound of footsteps drew closer to the open room, layered now with someone's voice. At first, Satoru couldn't make it out, but when the presence outside was only a few steps away, it hit him all at once -

It's the sound of *Suguru's* footstep.

"Don't let him in—
Don't—"

He clutched desperately at the arm Yuuta had wrapped around his waist, but Yuuta paid no attention to his feeble resistance. Stripped of cursed energy, deprived of the reinforcement of the Six Eyes, Satoru was powerless against a special-grade sorcerer like him. Yuuta tightened his grip on Satoru's jaw, forcing his face forward. Leaving Satoru no choice—

but to watch.

—to watch as he stepped into the room.

Long hair gathered into a neat bun came into view, along with that

familiar blend of youthful arrogance and unguarded warmth Satoru had once known all too well. Accompanied by a bright, effortless call of “Satoru,” someone who had long existed only in Satoru’s memories walked in, still wearing that warm smile that always made his chest ache when he recalled it.

The moment his eyes took in Satoru and the obscene scene unfolding before him, the smile stiffened. Pain crossed his face. Disappointment. Betrayal. He looked at Satoru only once more before turning away and leaving the room.

Satoru thrashed in vain against Yuuta’s hold, desperation tearing at him as he reached toward the retreating figure, voice breaking as he called out-

“Sugur—”

Before the name could fully leave his mouth, Satoru jolted upright in bed.

Dim light from the hallway seeped into the room. His limbs were free, unbound.

It had only been a nightmare.

How fortunate that he was still here, still safe, inside Nanami’s apartment. Even though panic still clung to him, cold sweat plastered to his back and gooseflesh prickling across his skin, he was here. He was safe. He no longer had to live inside the unbearable reality that nightmare replayed.

These past few weeks, he had dreamed of that night from time to time - the night the cursed drug was first forced into his body, the first time he was made to submit beneath Yuuta and Megumi. They had taken him countless times during his captivity, but that was the first night they had done it together, the beginning of a long, agonizing resistance that followed.

Satoru had once believed that having his body forced was one thing, but being made to *speak* submission was another. No matter how far they pushed him, he thought, he would never yield to both of them. But in the end, the hallucination born of the cursed drug, of *being used* in the very place where he and Suguru had shared their firsts, of being violated before Suguru's eyes was too cruel. It shattered his sense of reality, drove him into panic so deep he could no longer tell truth from illusion, until he begged them to stop.

He had surrendered. And from that surrender, there was no return. But thankfully, his cursed energy had come back now, even if only a trace, and he had escaped to this place. A safe place, where no one would come looking for him, Satoru thought. Neither Megumi nor Yuuta knew of his connection with Nanami. No one would think to search here.

Except for Ijichi.

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That day, it was Ijichi who came knocking on his door. When he stepped into the room, Satoru nearly drove a shard of the broken vase into his skull and used the moment to flee. He knew the trick would be useless against special-grade sorcerers like Yuuta or Megumi if they truly came for him, but at the very least, it could buy him a fraction of a second. Enough time to bolt down the stairwell through the emergency exit. He had spent two full weeks memorizing the building's layout and escape routes, making sure he could get away if he was cornered. Fortunately, Ijichi shouted in time, and Satoru recognized the voice. He dragged Ijichi into the room at once and slammed the door shut behind them, the shard still pressed tight against the man's thin throat, ready to strike at the slightest sign of resistance. His grip was strong enough that the jagged edge cut back into his own hand - no Infinity to soften the pain now. But he held fast, eyes wide and unblinking as he watched his junior from the same school, braced for any betrayal. Keeping that guarded stance, he used what remained of his size to compensate for his eroded strength, forcing Ijichi back toward the desk. He tilted his chin sharply, signaling for him to speak.

It turned out that Ijichi had been coming here regularly to clean Nanami's apartment ever since Nanami died.

Before Shibuya, Nanami seemed to have sensed something coming. He had begun asking Ijichi to look after the place in case one day he was no longer there. Ijichi had thought Nanami meant he planned to move to Malaysia, a dream he had spoken of for years. He never imagined it would end in death. Ijichi said Nanami had insisted the apartment needed someone to care for it, just in case *someone* might need to come back.

Someone, Satoru thought bitterly, could only mean *Satoru himself*. Nanami had given the key to only one person. It had been an invitation to be the second accepted occupant of that home. An invitation to family, to shelter, to a life shared together. And yet, Satoru had never been able to accept that warmth.

When he quietly returned the key, Nanami had texted him to say he'd left it beneath the second flowerpot by the door, in case Satoru ever wanted to come. The key stayed there, like a promise left unwithdrawn, as if to say: *my invitation is still here.* By the time Satoru finally came looking for it, the first owner was already gone.

Gone - like Suguru. Like so many others who had left him behind.

He received the news of Nanami's death about half a year after being released from the Prison Realm, back when he was still solely in Yuuta's hands.

The air that day had been heavy with dampness, the season shifting from autumn into winter, the atmosphere thick like a veil of water, the world sealed under a dull gray dome. *It must be humid,* Satoru had thought - though he couldn't actually feel it since the window Yuuta created in that room was as false as the love he claimed to hold for Satoru: visible, but never real enough to touch.

They had just finished having sex. Satoru's body ached from the exertion. It wasn't true that he felt nothing from it. From the standpoint of a lover, Yuuta could be gentle, if one ignored the chains he forged inside that gilded cage and the way he locked Satoru within it. But no matter how gentle Yuuta was, Satoru's instincts rebelled violently against it.

He leaned back against the headboard, watching his student pull a set of black clothes from the wardrobe, his long, bare body stretched before him. Two years overseas had made Yuuta taller, broader. Seen from behind, there was something faintly reminiscent of *Suguru* in the long legs, the strong arms honed through constant physical training - even the bearing, confident to the point of arrogance, mixed with the familiar breath of a curse.

If there was a difference, perhaps it lay only in their hair, one long, one cut short.

Once dressed, Yuuta returned to the bedside and kissed him.

Living with him for a time had taught Satoru Yuuta's habits: he loved

tender gestures, fleeting kisses like dragonflies skimming water, embraces that made Satoru seem fragile enough to shatter, as if they were truly in love, as if the one who had just brutally claimed his body wasn't Yuuta himself.

Satoru understood Yuuta's feelings. But he could not return them. And he never would. That love had been wrong from the moment it took root, wrong all the way through Yuuta's careful nurturing of it, rotten beyond repair, long before it reached its end.

Sensing his distraction during the kiss, Yuuta seemed displeased. With deliberate malice, he said, "I went to Nanami's death anniversary."

As he spoke, his eyes stayed fixed on Satoru's face, as if searching for the slightest ripple beneath that carefully neutral expression.

"Death anniversary? Whose?" Satoru remembered the chill that ran straight down his spine. He lunged forward, grabbing Yuuta by the collar. "What did you say? Nanami's death anniversary?!"

Yuuta frowned slightly at his agitation, but still reached out to steady him, one hand bracing Satoru's waist so his trembling legs wouldn't give way on the floor - ever since losing his cursed energy, long nights in bed always left Satoru like this, exhausted to the bone. With his other hand, Yuuta gently pried at the fingers clenched in his collar and said softly,

"That's right. Nanami passed away. After you were sealed in Shibuya."

Satoru couldn't remember how he reacted after hearing that. Only that everything around him blurred into haze. He kept asking the same question over and over, desperately hoping Yuuta would laugh and say it was a joke, that Nanami was still alive.

But it wasn't.

Yuuta answered patiently, again and again: Nanami was gone. Nanami - his junior. The man who had given him a private key to his apartment, who had invited him to come with hime and finally end the long, solitary decade of his life. Satoru had waited for the love of his life for ten years. Nanami had waited for ten years as well, for Satoru.

And then disaster struck, and Nanami was gone.

Satoru couldn't remember if he ever asked - perhaps he did, and

simply couldn't recall - how Nanami had died.

It wasn't until he met Ijichi that he finally heard the full account of the Shibuya Incident. Of the sacrifices made while the Six Eyes were sealed away. Of Nanami's death while Gojo Satoru was imprisoned. Of everything. Of all the lives paid in exchange for the body stolen from Suguru.

Nanami rested in a small cemetery on the outskirts of Tokyo, just over twenty minutes by taxi from his apartment. The grave was simple, white granite, engraved only with his name, his date of birth, and his date of death - two dates separated by a single line. A short dash, summarizing an entire life.

But it was only a cenotaph. Nanami's ashes were kept at Jujutsu High.

Ijichi said that only after Nanami's death did he realize how long Nanami had been thinking about dying. He had left behind a will written a year earlier, the day Satoru convinced him to return to the jujutsu world. Nanami had already transferred a large sum of money into Ijichi's account to maintain the apartment; the rest he donated away.

And he left one final request. Ijichi told him the next day, handing Satoru a photocopy of Nanami's will.

Please scatter my ashes at the shores of Kuantan.

Satoru stood frozen for a long time, staring at those words. He remembered everything: the key meant only for him, the phone that met the same fate after being returned, both carefully prepared for Nanami *for Satoru*.

He remembered Nanami's confession that night - They had slept together once. It was a few months after the Night Parade of a Hundred Demons .The final echo of Suguru's existence - that was how Satoru vaguely remembered it. It started with drinks. They got drunk, embarrassingly so. Somehow, they ended up back at Nanami's apartment.

When Satoru woke the next morning, the first thing he said was, "Please forget about last night."

And the first thing Nanami said was, "Do you want to eat something?"

Satoru had stared at him for a long while, watched Nanami reach out

to brush aside the messy strand of hair falling over Satoru's forehead, watched Nanami turn away and head into the kitchen. He watched Nanami's back as he busied himself there, and felt his nose sting sharply.

He wasn't sure why.

Perhaps it was just the onions.

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"Kuantan."

That was how he answered Ijichi when the man asked where he intended to go next.

After Ijichi swore, over and over again, that he would keep Satoru's hiding place secret, and after Satoru tentatively chose to trust his harmlessness and loyalty, Ijichi began visiting him here from time to time, keeping him company in Nanami's apartment. Not too often - careful not to draw Yuuta's or Megumi's attention - but enough to increase his visits from once a month to once every two or three weeks, always under the pretense that Nanami's apartment needed some minor repair.

Ijichi would update him on the state of the jujutsu world: on how the Three Great Families had become the Two Great Families; on how Megumi and Yuuta had jointly restructured the upper echelons; on how ordinary sorcerers were now being sent on far fewer dangerous missions. He knew Satoru was at odds with them, so he rarely voiced outright praise, but Satoru could hear the admiration threaded through his words all the same.

And it was only natural. Two youths, now two grown men, had reshaped the entire jujutsu world through sheer power alone.

Ijichi didn't know the nature of Satoru's conflict with his former students, those two prodigies so dazzling they had become the pride of the jujutsu world, so whenever their names came up, Satoru would simply nod absently and steer the conversation elsewhere. Ijichi had never been an especially interesting person, but there was a certain pleasure for Satoru in teasing someone so earnest and stiff. From time

to time, the two of them would reminisce about old days at Jujutsu High, recalling how bright their youth had been, how much they had once had each other.

And so things continued, steady and unremarkable, for another two months.

Only then did Satoru begin to feel truly safe.

Ijichi continued to bring him news of the Two Great Families' manhunt. The two leading clans had dispatched people everywhere, offering rewards for information on a special-grade containment cursed tool from China: the silver bracelet on Satoru's wrist. It was a clever bounty: using a special-grade cursed tool as the pretext, while offering a slew of high-grade cursed tools as incentives, drawing countless eyes into the search.

A patrol force had also been established, most frequently appearing at Jujutsu High, at Satoru's former residence, and even at the old home of Suguru's parents. High-level sorcerers, resources that should have been deployed sparingly, were now being lavishly spent by the two leaders, all to hunt him down.

Ijichi had also heard that the Two Great Families had extended their search as far as Kyoto -the territory now dominated by Itadori Yuji and Sukuna. Ijichi didn't know whether the two now existed as one being or two, only that after the Culling Game and Kenjaku's death, they had returned to a shrine in Kyoto and established a stronghold of their own, creating an unspoken boundary between Tokyo and Kyoto.

The Two Great Families' interference was, naturally, unwelcome to the ruler of that region, sparking a cascade of conflicts and unrest. In the end, the Two Great Families refused to withdraw from Kyoto. Rumors spread that their treasured possession had already fallen into Sukuna's hands - but rumors were all they were. No one truly knew.

What mattered was this: the stalemate created the perfect conditions for someone to slip away unnoticed. And that was the best possible moment for him to disappear.

The scheduled flight was set for the end of October, just in time for Satoru to fulfill Nanami's wish before the third anniversary of his death. He also planned to stay in Kuantan a little longer - if possible, a long, long while. Southeast Asia was small but steeped in quiet mystery; perhaps somewhere there he might find a way to counter the cursed tool locked around his wrist. And if not, then Japan was simply

not a place he could return to yet.

The Great Migration, Satoru called it in his head, amused by how childish the name sounded - the second time in his life he had uprooted himself, after leaving the Gojo clan to study in Tokyo. Migration demanded a new beginning, and with it came an unexpected nostalgia for the old, especially for sweets that somehow tasted better in Japan than anywhere else. At first, they had merely been fuel for Infinity; later, a fabricated sweetness to dull the ache left behind by Suguru; now, they had become one of Satoru's lingering attachments to this place.

So when Ijichi knocked on the door, the same ill-fated knocking from the other day that had nearly earned him a slit throat, simply because the overly proper man insisted on knocking even when no one was supposed to be home, Satoru sprang up from the mound of luggage piled in the living room and said brightly,

"We still have four hours before the flight. Take me to buy kikufuku."

Ijichi tried to refuse - Satoru could see the worry written plainly across his face, fear of being discovered tightening his features - but Satoru cut him off at once.

"Shinjuku's crowded. No one's going to recognize me. Just five minutes," he said, dragging out the last word the way he always did. On Ijichi, it had an effect more comical than persuasive. After a bit of pleading, Ijichi finally relented, opening the car door and driving them toward Shinjuku.

Satoru's favorite kikufuku shop sat right at an intersection where cars couldn't stop, so he had to get out, pull his coat collar high, and slip into the flow of people. After the battles, non-sorcerers once again displayed their inexhaustible vitality, flooding the streets with the same bustling life as before. Satoru had once loved losing himself in that crowd, pretending he wasn't the bearer of the Six Eyes, pretending he was just an ordinary person with an ordinary life. Only now, having truly become ordinary, did he find that old fantasy faintly ridiculous.

Even so, melting into Shinjuku, biting into a fragrant green-tea kikufuku, watching the crowd drift by like waves, it still made him just as happy as it always had. The line was long, nearly thirty minutes, but it took Satoru less than ten to finish eating. He even bought an extra box for Ijichi, who was waiting in the car. Humming

lightly, Satoru carried the paper box back toward where the car was parked, an old Toyota half-swallowed by the crowd.

One hand opening the door, the other swinging the box cheerfully, Satoru slid into the back seat and said with a grin,

“I got one for you too.”

The car door slammed shut beside him with a dull *thud*. There was no familiar, respectful “Yes, sir” in reply.

Instinct made Satoru look up.

Ijichi was restrained in the passenger seat, bound and immobilized. The steering wheel now belonged to someone else, who was already starting the engine and pulling into traffic, leaving Satoru no chance to escape.

The person beside Ijichi finally turned around. A painfully familiar smile struck Satoru like a blow.

It was the smile of someone who had no right - absolutely no right - to be in this car.

The man leaned closer, a hand dense with cursed energy settling against Satoru’s neck, precisely over his carotid artery which was pounding like a drum. As Satoru tensed to react, he heard a voice chuckled,

“Have you had enough fun, Satoru-sensei?”

Chapter 5: Megumi | Forced (2)

Lately, Okkotsu Yuuta - yes, *Okkotsu* Yuuta; Megumi refused to call him by Satoru-sensei's family name - had been a constant source of irritation. Ever since Megumi let the their dear *kitten* slip from its cage and run, Yuuta had taken to harping on it every few days without fail. There were moments when Megumi truly wanted to land a few solid punches just to shut him up, but after thinking it through, he always swallowed the urge, for the sake of their agreement.

It was almost funny, really, how their relationship hadn't always been this strained. He and Yuuta had met through Satoru. Back when Megumi hadn't even enrolled yet, Satoru had dragged him along to meet Okkotsu Yuuta for those so-called "offline meetups of future special-grade sorcerers," activities Satoru inexplicably adored. Yuuta back then was shy and quiet; Megumi himself wasn't much for words either. Most of the talking during those gatherings had been left to Satoru alone. Still, familiarity breeds ease. And with Yuuta being an upperclassman whose strength Megumi genuinely respected then, the two maintained a proper, mutual regard.

"Get closer, you two. You'll become partners you can trust one day," Satoru had said then, slinging an arm around each of them and pulling them together. Who could have known he would be so right? They had indeed become partners - *or perhaps accomplices was the better word* - joining hands to imprison the Six Eyes himself, the divine child of the jujutsu world, for over a year now.

Satoru's escape itself wasn't all that surprising. The strongest sorcerer alive had never been the sort of man weak enough to accept a fate as a gilded songbird, trapped for the rest of his life. He had tried to flee countless times since the day Yuuta first confined him, right up until the moment Megumi himself entered the picture. The reason Megumi had chosen to administer the cursed drug so ruthlessly was precisely because Satoru had nearly succeeded once, coming terrifyingly close to escaping the Gojo estate with a body that barely retained any cursed energy at all.

The curse bracelet restrained power - but it never restrained pride. Megumi understood that well. What he hadn't expected was this: even after the drug had been forced into Satoru's body, even after his flesh and blood were placed under the control of not one but *two* special-grade sorcerers, Satoru still managed to pry open a crack in the cursed

tool's restraint. He turned the very fluctuations of the drug they created into an opportunity and escaped. Megumi could still vividly recall that afternoon. The figure running through the flower forest, unsteady but relentless. The Six Eyes stripped of Infinity's protection, bare feet striking gravel until blood welled up - yet still running, deeper and deeper into the woods that cradled the villa. Like a beautiful peacock thrashing desperately for freedom.

Satoru's blow had sent Megumi reeling for over ten minutes. The moment he recovered, he called Yuuta back, and the two split up to search in opposite directions. The forest on Zenin private land wasn't small, but it wasn't vast either. It should have been nearly impossible to find a true blind spot within an illusion of that scale.

And yet Satoru had done it. He had found the stream precisely, vanished at its edge - and by the time Megumi and Yuuta arrived, all they caught was the trailing glimpse of white, disappearing in a flash of teleportation.

Gone.

Fortunately, it took him only about two weeks to locate Satoru's hiding place. From the very first day Satoru fled, Yuuta and Megumi had fanned out, searching every corner of Tokyo where he might possibly have run. Once they concluded that the remnants of cursed energy left by the restraining bracelet were too faint to allow long-distance movement, it became clear that Satoru could only be lingering somewhere within the city. While Yuuta returned to inspect Jujutsu High - the most obvious starting point, Megumi chose a different path: The first places he searched were the three residences connected to Geto Suguru - first, the childhood home in the suburbs, where Geto had murdered his parents at seventeen; second, the villa of the Star Religious Group, where he had lived out nine years of counterfeit sanctity; and finally, a place far more discreet: an apartment on a high floor of a residential building near Shinjuku. Busy enough that the flow of people ensured no one paid attention to unfamiliar faces passing through, yet modest enough to avoid drawing the scrutiny of neighbors. An apartment in the heart of Tokyo, one whose ownership few people knew belonged to a special-grade curse user. Megumi knew, however. He knew because it was a place where Geto and Satoru had met from time to time, over the course of nearly four thousand days spent straddling opposite sides of a war they could never escape.

Megumi didn't think Satoru would be foolish enough to hide in the

first two locations, but he also hadn't expected that Satoru would *avoid* that secret rendezvous entirely. Perhaps Satoru suspected Megumi knew about it. After all, Megumi had never hidden the fact that, since assuming control of the clan and gaining command over Tokyo, he had quietly unearthed an enormous amount of information about Satoru and Geto Suguru alike. After finding the apartment empty, Megumi carefully left behind several threads of sensing cursed energy before changing course, toward Ieiri Shoko's place.

When Shoko realized it was him at the door, she hesitated briefly, then still invited him inside for tea. Shoko was one of the few people who had remained close to Satoru for so long without stirring Megumi's irritation or jealousy. Perhaps it was because she carried an air untouched by worldly desire, something neither Geto Suguru nor Kento Nanami could claim.

One of Megumi's earliest memories of her was the faint silhouette of shoulder-length black hair drifting through cigarette smoke, perched casually outside Satoru's house as she waited to walk to school with him. At the time, Megumi had only recently begun living with Satoru, still a mischievous elementary schooler who returned home injured every few days. The moment she saw him limping toward the house, blood seeping from his foot, she had vaulted over without hesitation, dragged him inside, and healed the wound with reverse cursed technique. She wasn't gentle in the way Tsumiki was. And also, her jet-black hair didn't resemble his sister's warm brown at all. And yet, the two of them had given him some of the rare moments of quiet kindness scattered throughout a childhood spent constantly on the move. Because of that, when Megumi saw her again now, he unconsciously drew himself inward. The sharp dominance of the Zenin clan head receded, folding back into the figure of a young man barely past twenty, sitting in a living room and waiting while she poured him a cup of tea.

"Do you have any news about Satoru, Megumi?"

That was the very first thing she asked: straight to the point, unmistakably Ieiri Shoko. Concise, efficient, never one to circle around what mattered. Since Shibuya, and since the Twin Great Families had established the new order, she had withdrawn from frontline missions, devoting herself instead to researching ways to dismantle the Prison Realm, to find a path that might free Satoru. So when Megumi came to her, Satoru was naturally the first name on her lips. There was, after all, no reason for Megumi to seek her out that did not lead back to Gojo Satoru. Megumi did not answer her with a

lie - Shoko would see through any attempt at concealment immediately. Instead, he took a quiet sip of tea, then deflected the question by casually asking about her life over the past year. Yes, it had been more than two years since they last met since the memorial service held to pray for those lost and broken in the wake of Shibuya and the Culling Game.

The conversation drifted on like that for about ten minutes: one person probing gently, the other evading with practiced calm. It was just enough time for Megumi's shikigami to sweep the surrounding area and leave behind another faint thread of warning cursed energy. Once he was certain that Satoru had never been here, Megumi set his teacup down and stood, offering a brief farewell under the pretext of clan business. Shoko only nodded to acknowledge it. But just as he was about to step outside, a hand reached out and caught the sleeve of his coat.

Her voice followed him. "He really sees you as his *son*. As *family*, Megumi."

The sentence came without preamble or explanation. She did not say what she knew, but perhaps it was simply the intuition of a woman who had watched them grow for more than a decade. Megumi met her earnest gaze and saw the same concern she had once shown both for her too-young best friend and for the adopted child who had been forced to grow up too fast. That familiar look made him restrain the instinctive urge to pull away. Instead, he asked calmly,

"What do you mean by that, Shoko-san?"

Her grip tightened briefly, then loosened, as though she had reconsidered mid-thought. When she spoke again, her voice was level, almost clinical. yet laced with a fatigue that came from knowing she had no control over what was unfolding.

"At the Shibuya memorial," she said, "I saw the *flower* you placed before Satoru's name."

The Shibuya memorial - Megumi remembered it clearly now. As volunteers handed out yellow roses and blue lilies for each fallen sorcerer, he had refused both. Instead, he had reached out himself and taken a single pale-pink camellia, laying it before Gojo Satoru's name.

Yellow roses are for fathers.
Blue lilies are for teachers.
And camellias -

they mean *I am obsessed with you. I am intoxicated by you.* (*)

So she had noticed.

Of course she had.

Damn women - and their damnable sixth sense.

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After both he and Yuuta had checked several familiar places to no avail, Megumi began widening the search, combing through every corner of Tokyo, revisiting each place Satoru might conceivably go. In the end, he stopped before a small apartment, barely sixty or seventy square meters, nestled in an old residential neighborhood. Megumi had come here on a gamble, never truly expecting to find anything. And yet, against all odds, he found his *dear kitten* that had slipped its cage.

It was unexpected because, as far as Megumi knew, Satoru's relationship with Nanami had never been especially close - they were neither distant nor intimate during the nine years Nanami had been away from the jujutsu world. At most, it amounted to a few hollow drinking sessions back when Geto Suguru had just died. Had Yuuta not casually mentioned the approaching third death anniversary of Nanami, and the third Shibuya memorial they were meant to preside over, Megumi might never have thought to check Nanami's residence himself, and never would have discovered his dear white kitten sleeping soundly in a place he did not truly belong. Megumi entered Nanami's apartment at 11:30 p.m., having rushed over the moment his shikigami confirmed a match for Satoru's cursed energy trace. When he stepped inside, the man he had searched for so relentlessly - skipping meals and sleep for days - was curled obediently beneath warm blankets, the bedside lamp beside him not yet fully turned off.

In the past, Satoru had insisted on sleeping in pitch darkness. He used to joke that the Six Eyes were bothersome enough; he didn't need extra irritation from light while resting. Now, he slept with the lamp on - perhaps a habit formed during the time he was confined within the Gojo clan's hidden chamber, subconsciously clinging to light.

Megumi's kitten, basking in gentle warmth, slept deeply, unaware that

its predator had mastered the Ten Shadows to the point of melting seamlessly into darkness, unnoticed. Megumi sat there, submerged in the dim chiaroscuro of the room, watching a defenseless, sleeping Satoru with his vulnerable throat fully exposed. Satoru's neck was pale - so pale that faint blue veins traced beneath the skin, delicate enough to give the illusion that one firm squeeze might shatter the porcelain-white beauty instantly. Of course, no one could break the Divine Child while Infinity and the Six Eyes still belonged to him.

No one, except Megumi and Yuuta. Except the godslayers who had dragged a god down from his pedestal with their own hands, defiling him with the base desires of the mortal world.

The Divine Child was weaker now than any ordinary human, stripped of the strength to resist desecration. Weak enough for Megumi to take hold of him, to control him at will.

Megumi didn't realize when his hand lifted to trace Satoru's neck. The very place where Satoru had struck him to escape. The place where one of the two blood-drops of the cursed drug - his blood - lay dormant. With just a little force, Megumi could awaken the cursed blood, turn it into a demon that would torment the Divine Child, as it had so many times before.

He truly wanted to do it, to wake Satoru, to force him back into the shrine he himself had built, to remind him who he belonged to, whom he was meant to worship and revere.

But then Satoru shifted in his sleep. Unconsciously, he searched for warmth, brushing gently against Megumi's open palm like an ignorant kitten nuzzling into soft fur, unaware that said fur belonged to a beast waiting to devour it whole. That small, absent-minded touch *softened* the predator. Megumi withdrew his hand, allowing himself to dissolve back into shadow. He remained there, silent, watching Satoru sleep through the night. It felt as though he had returned to years long past: lying on an upper bunk bed, secretly watching his foster father sleep, using his gaze alone to pin him down, to drown him in the unspoken lust of adolescence pushed to its furthest extreme.

He thought of many things that night, of Satoru, of Yuuta, of Geto Suguru, and then of Nanami.

In the end, the next morning, he let his beautiful kitten remain in the fragile little safe haven Satoru had built for himself. Instead of carrying him back to the gilded cage within the Gojo estate, Megumi

brought a few trusted subordinates to pay a visit to Ijichi.

Ijichi was someone who had appeared throughout Gojo Satoru's youthful years, a man who had nearly complete knowledge of the teacher's schedule and habits. Megumi also knew that Ijichi had maintained contact with Nanami even after the blond man left the jujutsu world, and that it was precisely for this reason Nanami had entrusted him with the care of that apartment after his departure.

Forcing Ijichi to talk about the relationship between Nanami and Satoru was not difficult. No matter how loyal he was to Satoru, a man burdened with family and emotional ties possessed far too many weaknesses to exploit. After only a few veiled threats directed at his family, Megumi quickly realized something he had never accounted for: After nine years of watching his foster father from afar, meticulously studying him in preparation for the day he would finally close his hand around him, Megumi had overlooked a gaping *blind spot.*

He had underestimated the *bond* between Satoru and Nanami. He had assumed they were nothing more than ordinary friends, men who shared a few unremarkable drinking sessions, just like so many others who passed through Satoru's life. He had never imagined that "friends" could end up in a bedroom together, that alcohol could ferment into *desire* and drag two people into something resembling a shared history.

When Ijichi reached the part about several times he was picking Satoru up from Nanami's house the morning after, he clearly tried to rush through the details. Even so, Megumi felt his fingers tighten unconsciously, crushing the armrest of his chair until it warped under his grip. Sensing the darkening of Megumi's mood, Ijichi hurried to patch things over. "But that was all," he said quickly. "Satoru never had feelings for Nanami."

Megumi smiled.

He didn't notice that the smile failed to reach his eyes.

If he had truly never been moved, Megumi thought bitterly, *would Gojo Satoru really have drunk himself into a state where he allowed someone else to touch him?*

But even if there had been feelings, Megumi though, then *so what?*

The Divine Child on high had already been dragged down from the

altar by Megumi's own hands. The proud peacock had been caged, forced to bow and kneel beneath him. With enough coercion, enough pain, all lingering attachments could be shattered and erased.

Anyone who dared to lay claim to Satoru's longing -

Erase them all.

Even within memory, they must not be allowed to exist.

Erase everything.

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Forcing Ijichi into working for Megumi proved just as easy as forcing him to talk. A few carefully chosen threats were all it took for Megumi to gain a useful pawn. He knew Ijichi did not truly submit - knew the man would still, whenever he could, try to leave hints for Satoru to escape - but as long as Zenin Megumi held the blade by its hilt, no one would slip through the heavenly net woven by the Ten Shadows. And so, that morning, Megumi watched with quiet amusement as Ijichi knocked on the tightly shut door of Nanami's apartment, the same place now sheltering his beautiful white kitten.

Silver hair appeared in the crack of the door, accompanied by a brief flash of light from a shard of broken mirror. It seemed the man inside had smashed something to defend himself. The unpolished glass in his hand was sharp enough to slit a throat with ease, yet that very sharpness had bitten back, cutting into Satoru's palm until blood welled up.

His white kitten didn't seem to care. His brows were drawn tight as he struggled to seize control of the situation, dragging Ijichi inside. That single fleeting moment was enough to set Megumi's blood *boiling*. A Satoru who fought like this - cornered, feral, blazing with resistance - was far more beautiful, far more intoxicating, than a Satoru obediently kept in a gilded cage. Megumi pressed his tongue against an aching canine tooth. The faint metallic sweetness spreading in his mouth stirred an almost irresistible urge to rush forward and seize that wild, exquisite cat at once.

But he restrained himself, recalling the Zenin clan's manuals on

taming beasts. Credit where it was due: the most debauched of the Three Great Families had always treated the domestication of wild creatures as a form of entertainment, passing down techniques on how to turn a proud white tiger into a docile house cat. You had to let the tiger believe escape was possible - then shatter every last hope with decisive force, until the beast finally understood there was no way out, and that the only release left was submission.

Submission.

Megumi rolled the alluring word over in his mind. If it were attached to Satoru's name—

how devastatingly beautiful it would be.

In the days that followed, just as Megumi had anticipated, Satoru kept asking Ijichi about Nanami, and soon made the decision to visit the empty grave at the cemetery. At first, that had been the very place Megumi intended to break him. Right there, before Nanami's memorial - take Satoru, claim him, and make him understand that he no longer belonged to anyone else. The image of Satoru being tormented until he finally gave up, collapsing before the hollow grave of another man, thrilled Megumi beyond measure.

But then Satoru suddenly spoke of Kuantan. And Megumi changed his mind.

Compared to a meaningless grave in Tokyo, *Kuantan* was the place where he could truly force Satoru to *break*. The longer the hope stretched on, the more beautiful the fantasy; the closer peace seemed to be, the more devastating reality would become - more coercive, more destructive. A god-child was not something mortals were meant to touch. And so Megumi would personally erase every unnecessary illusion clouding *his* god, return him to the altar, remind him where he belonged - here, with Megumi, to be worshipped and revered by Megumi alone.

The strongest sorcerer belonged to him.
Only to *him*.

During that time, Megumi even staged a few bounty hunts, deliberately loosening Satoru's guard. He knew Satoru didn't fully trust Ijichi at first; Satoru still tried, through Nanami's old connections, to verify everything Ijichi said about the current state of the jujutsu world. So Megumi truly stirred things up, launching a nationwide bounty for a special-grade cursed tool. Yuta opposed it at

first. But after the two of them fought to a standstill, and after Megumi personally guaranteed he would retrieve the cat soon, Yuta finally relented and allowed the Twin Clans' bounty to be announced. It was all theater, nothing more than a lullaby to coax the white cat into the trap Megumi had drawn.

Only the provocation in Kyoto was real. That was because the so-called King of Curses, Sukuna, for reasons unknown, had demanded the Twin Clans hand over the Prison Realm. Itadori Yuuji even stepped forward, claiming they wanted it to free Satoru, but only a fool would fail to understand what they truly wanted. Megumi had stayed by Satoru's side long enough, had watched the swarm of admirers around him closely enough, to recognize that look in Itadori's eyes immediately.

After the Culling Game, Sukuna and Itadori still shared a single body - Itadori's - having reached some form of internal agreement regarding control and cursed energy. That shared blood and interwoven power had made them resemble each other more than before: when Sukuna surfaced, he carried traces of a young man's fervor; when Itadori regained control, a peculiar, unsettling malice lingered beneath his gentleness. And the two of them shared one thing above all else—

their eyes, when they spoke of *Satoru*.

That gaze - worship mixed with yearning - had lived in Yuuji's eyes for a long time now. Long before Shibuya. Long before that bastard Kenjaku ever appeared. Megumi didn't know whether Sukuna had been influenced by Yuuji or the other way around, but Sukuna's gaze had changed all the same, layered now with a crude, unmistakable hunger of desire.

Megumi truly wanted to kill him, kill them both, if not for the fact that the body still belonged to Yuuji, who was, despite everything, still his friend. Though even that friendship had long since been shadowed by a quiet hostility, ever since Megumi realized that Yuuji, too, was enamored with *Satoru*.

That hostility was quickly noticed by both Yuta and Yuuji. Perhaps wolf cubs shared an instinct for sensing rivals, Megumi didn't know. What he *did* know was this: Every beast in the pack wanted to be the alpha.; Every one of them wanted to claim the God-Child they worshipped. And though Megumi was cooperating with Yuta now, had even been the one to propose the alliance; sooner or later, he would rise above them all. And when that day came, he would claim Satoru

for himself.

Completely.

Because in a fight with Okkotsu Yuta, Megumi would never be the one to lose, especially for Satoru. Because unlike Yuta, Megumi was not lost in the illusion that Satoru harbored feelings for him, that if he stayed by Satoru's side long enough, those feelings would someday be returned. Megumi knew better - he had always known the saddest truth: *Gojo Satoru did not love him.* That truth was the clearest thing Megumi had ever understood, forged over an entire youth spent gazing toward Satoru's back. Megumi was like a small koi fish, pouring every ounce of youthful fervor into leaping the Dragon Gate, dreaming of reaching the brilliant lighthouse that shined upon his life, only to discover that the lighthouse was just another ship lost in the sea like himself. Another ship sailed toward the lighthouse called Geto Suguru.

Some said Satoru had moved on from Geto, but that wasn't true. Satoru had only turned his back and walked away from the world *with-Geto-Suguru*. The world in Satoru then split cleanly into two halves: *with Geto* and *without Geto*. Satoru chose the latter life when Geto left - but that life was still bound, irrevocably, to the name "Geto."

Gojo Satoru did not love Megumi. Megumi understood this perfectly.

But *so what?*

If it could not be love, then Megumi would still force his beloved Satoru to stay by his side.

Forever.

On the morning of Satoru's flight to Kuantan, Megumi led several Zenin retainers with him. For two months, he had hidden Satoru's whereabouts from Yuuta, because Yuuta would never have approved of this slow, deliberate game of cat and trap. Megumi had only told him to be ready that night to receive Satoru's return. Yuta had tried to follow, but the fight with Itadori in Kyoto intervened, forcing him to leave the city.

Seated in a car cutting through the city at high speed, Megumi turned a new cursed pill over in his palm. It's a gift he especially prepared for

his kitten. The pill contained two additional drops of blood - his own, and Yuuta's - meant to reinforce the old bindings, to tighten the shackles once more and ensure that Satoru would never have another chance to escape.

This time, Megumi would make him truly give up.

This time, he would force Satoru to understand that his body, his mind, even his heart would ultimately kneel before Megumi.

That was why Megumi had so easily allowed Ijichi to take Satoru out for kikifuku - something never included in the original plan.

It didn't matter. Actually, it's even *better:* The livelier the white cat, the more hope he carried, the easier it would be to strip everything away, until only obedience remained.

Megumi imagined Satoru's eyes lighting up at the sight of sweets, remembered the fierce resistance he had shown days before, the line of red blood blooming along the weapon clenched in his hand. A dry heat rose unbidden in Megumi's body. How beautiful it would be - to press that proud, breathtaking Six Eyes beneath him. To torment him, devour him, and finally claim him.

Megumi leaned lazily against the car window, watching white hair slip through the crowd and vanish into the flow of people heading toward the sweets shop.

One more intersection. The Maybach eased through the dense Shinjuku traffic. Just a few more steps, and the cat would be caught.

He had devised countless punishments for his disobedient little kitten. So many, far too many, desires piling up since the day he found Satoru again.

A wild beast, once captured, would not submit at once. But Megumi was patient. Patient enough to peel away those thorns one by one, to strip him back down to the soft, compliant fur meant to rest quietly in his arms.

The thought curved Megumi's lips into a faint smile. He lifted a hand, signaling the driver to turn in front of the kikifuku shop, to locate Ijichi's car and wait for the cat to step neatly into the trap. And, unbidden, an ugly little joke surfaced in his mind - perhaps he should taste the kikifuku Satoru loved so much himself. Only this time, he would taste it from this kitten's breathtaking body.

But when they arrived, there was no old Toyota parked at the designated spot. Megumi frowned and stepped out of the car, releasing a shikigami to search the surrounding area. When it finally returned with a familiar trace of cursed energy, his brows drew together even tighter.

He cursed under his breath,

“Damn it - Sukuna, you bastard.”

Chapter 6: Sukuna | Held

“Have you had enough fun, Satoru-sensei?”

Inside the car that tore onto the expressway as though racing the wind itself, the silence that settled between them was deeper than the King of Curses had anticipated, so quiet that it bordered on uncanny. When Sukuna came here, he had fully expected the brat with the Six Eyes to resist - at the very least to lash out with what little cursed energy still lingered in his body, to try and smash the car door open and flee, or failing that to bare his teeth and claws in some desperate display of defiance, much like cornered beasts always did when driven to the brink, expending their final scraps of strength in the foolish hope of frightening the hunter and clawing out a path to escape. Of course, such creatures never escaped; Sukuna knew that better than anyone, for no prey had ever slipped from the King of Curses’s grasp, especially not prey he had chosen to seize with his own hands, no matter how fiercely it struggled.

And yet, the Six Eyes brat surprised him.

Instead of panicking, instead of thrashing, he merely pressed himself against the far door of the car, silent and taut with restrained vigilance, like a white panther with its fur bristling - not lashing out blindly, but waiting, measuring, biding his time for the precise moment to strike back. That composure, Sukuna decided, was worthy of acknowledgment - interesting, even -proof that the Six Eyes was not, at the very least, a fool, and enough to justify the trouble of coming here himself, even if part of his presence was owed to that irritating, laughable pact he shared with the Itadori brat.

When that glass-wearing black-haired idiot - whose name Sukuna could not be bothered to remember, for frail, insignificant humans were never worth such effort - had arrived at his Kyoto estate with news that Gojo Satoru was still alive and now under the control of two former students from Jujutsu High, Sukuna had nearly laughed aloud at the sheer irony of it.

So the lofty, *untouchable* Six Eyes, who had clutched so fiercely to that Zenin brat he insisted on protecting, had finally been bitten straight through the throat by his own misplaced mercy, driven into a dead end so complete that not even the simplest cursed technique remained at his disposal. Sukuna had always despised the messy emotions of humans - love, kinship, loyalty, and all other such pathetic impulses

that clouded judgment where power was concerned - and he had never understood why Gojo Satoru would sink so deeply into ruin merely to protect a handful of children who did not even share his blood. “To that extent,” meant opposing the higher-ups outright, as Kenjaku the useless schemer had once recounted, describing how the Six Eyes repeatedly clashed with authority to shield Itadori and another brat who carried a cursed spirit, Okkotsu, if Sukuna recalled correctly; it meant sacrificing a decisive step and allowing himself to be sealed within the Prison Realm, dealing catastrophic damage to his own technique; and in the end, it meant being captured by those very children, bound with cursed tools and drugs, reduced to a caged songbird.

How generous. How noble.

And the price of such generosity had been nearly two years spent inside a gilded cage, completely severed from the outside world, unaware that the Three Great Families had fallen, unaware that power had shifted hands, and unaware of how relentlessly a new force had been searching for him. *Relentlessly*, indeed. Sukuna had witnessed it with his own eyes: Itadori exhausting every means at his disposal after the Culling Game to break the seal of the Prison Realm, throwing everything he had into the attempt.

After the Culling Game, Sukuna and Itadori had reached a new arrangement of coexistence, agreeing to live more “peacefully” within a single body, taking turns in control while the other remained conscious, un-suppressed in will, memory, and awareness. In exchange, Sukuna shared a portion - *not all* - of the cursed energy and techniques carved into his soul, granting the boy power sufficient to contend with the two rulers of the newly formed Twin Great Families.

Sukuna knew well that Gojo Satoru had once intended to exploit him, to carve Sukuna’s technique into Itadori’s soul and then have the boy kill him outright, claiming full dominion over both body and power, but what the Six Eyes had failed to anticipate was that Sukuna’s ancient technique did not allow the soul to be severed from the self. In the end, compromise had been inevitable. Soul and flesh alike were shared, and a mutual pact of peace was forged, each bound to support the other when necessary, so long as neither crossed the other’s limits - a pact that granted Sukuna unprecedented freedom of movement, yet simultaneously dragged him here now, bound by its terms, into this very moment.

Into this speeding car. Into Tokyo. A city crawling with weak,

insignificant humans - and a city the Cursed King loathed. To *free* the Six Eyes.

Sukuna remembered with unsettling clarity the moment Itadori had erupted in anger when that bespectacled man came seeking him out, delivering the news that Gojo Satoru was now under the control of Zenin Megumi and Gojo Yuuta. The rage that surged through the brat had been unlike anything Sukuna had felt in nearly three years of sharing the same body - a violent, unfamiliar intensity that sent the heart hammering faster, heat flooding every limb as if the flesh itself were about to combust, restrained only by Itadori's desperate effort not to tear apart the Twin Great Families' estates on the spot for daring to lock *his* canary back into that wretched gilded cage. Itadori's hands had clenched into fists so tight the knuckles nearly blanched white, and when he finally spoke, Sukuna realized that his teeth had been ground together so hard it sounded as though the boy were on the verge of baring his fangs and lunging at the messenger's throat.

The man with the glasses visibly trembled under that pressure, stammering as he explained the scheme, about how they intended to break the Six Eyes' wings at the very moment those immaculate white pinions dared to lift, to ensure he would never fly beyond their grasp again.

The more the man spoke, the denser the air in the room became, thickening until it felt almost tangible, as though it might solidify at any second and shatter every outsider foolish enough to remain within reach of that fury.

And yet, in the end, Itadori reined himself in. He swallowed the rage burning through his veins, forced his breathing steady, and ordered the man to continue carrying out Zenin's instructions, calmly, almost chillingly, informing him that when the appointed day arrived, *they* would come to retrieve the Six Eyes themselves.

They.

Sukuna had not known where the boy found the audacity to use that word, to speak as though "they" naturally included the Curse King as well, binding Sukuna into that declaration with nothing more than conviction and defiance. But there it was, spoken without hesitation, as though Itadori had already decided that when Gojo Satoru was taken back, Sukuna would stand beside him whether he wished to or not.

In truth, Sukuna did not hate Gojo Satoru. It was true that the brat had been insolent toward him, true that Sukuna had once entertained the urge to tear him apart simply to punish that refusal to bow, but hatred was something else entirely. Hatred was revulsion, an instinctive rejection so absolute that one wished never to see, never to hear, never even to exist within the same space as the object of that loathing, and Sukuna did not feel that way toward Gojo Satoru. Annoyance, certainly. Displeasure, without question. But *not hatred*.

The brat did nothing to please him, yet at the very least, he was strong - a sorcerer with an abundance of cursed energy and an overwhelmingly potent technique, the kind of existence that did not inspire disgust so much as the desire to conquer, to trample beneath one's feet, to break apart piece by piece rather than erase outright.

Killing the Six Eyes would, without exaggeration, be among the most entertaining acts Sukuna had indulged in over centuries of existence as a curse, and just as certainly, the flesh and blood of the Six Eyes would be unimaginably exquisite across his long, ravenous lifetime. He imagined snapping the peacock's wings mid-flight, watching drops of cursed-energy-saturated blood spill and thin as they fell, crimson soaking into immaculate white feathers to form a contrast so obscene and exhilarating it made his pulse stir; in his golden age he had devoured the flesh of countless elite sorcerers, yet none could compare to the flavor of one who carried both the Six Eyes and Infinity, whose veins bore the inherited might of the ancient Gojo lineage itself.

Sukuna realized, distantly, that whenever he thought of Gojo Satoru, *hunger followed*. It was the hunger of a king of beasts locking eyes with an arrogant challenger - one weaker in raw might, perhaps, yet bold enough to stand as an equal - and feeling the immediate urge to close his jaws around that pale, elegant throat, to tear until blood burst forth, to let agony flood and stain those cerulean eyes with submission before slowly, deliberately gnawing, devouring, savoring every fragment.

And Sukuna realized that alongside that sudden hunger came something else as well: an unmistakable, feral desire to dominate. That this being *had* to be defeated by his hand, had to kneel at his feet, and that no one - no one at all - was permitted to strip away the Six Eyes' pride except him. Because the Six Eyes, Gojo Satoru, damned Divine Child, whatever these modern sorcerers dared to call him, belonged to the Curse King.

And to Sukuna *alone*.

No one else was worthy of touching his prey or his rival.

And so, when word reached him from Uraume that the Six Eyes had been sealed away by that wretched bastard Kenjaku, Sukuna's first and only desire was to locate the Prison Realm at once, shatter it to pieces, and drag the Six Eyes out for a proper battle worthy of both of them. *Stupid brat,* he cursed as he strode through the beautifully ruined remains of Shibuya, though devastation was usually a sight that delighted him, and yet, in that moment, even the desolation failed to amuse him as it once had while he spat his contempt at that foolish brat.

That brat was foolish enough to be captured simply because of a lover lost more than a decade ago - when Uraume gave him a swift recounting of the situation, Sukuna immediately understood what trick Kenjaku must have used. Gojo Satoru's weakness had always been his emotions; that was precisely the flaw that would ensure his defeat in any battle. *A god must not love mortals*, that was the rule. And the reason Sukuna could become the Curse King, and would one day become the god of this world, was because he was superior to a Gojo Satoru softened by love and kinship. Too much attachment bred defeat, regardless of the battlefield. And so Gojo Satoru lost, lost in a way so pathetically foolish that Sukuna had wanted to tear him out of the Prison Realm with his own hands just to fight him properly.

Then, of course, many things followed. The Culling Game began; the brat Itadori was dragged into endless battles without reprieve; and the agreement that bound the two of them into coexistence caused years to blur together before Sukuna even noticed their passage. From time to time, he still spared a glance toward Kenjaku's domain to check on the Prison Realm - and at least those idiotic ancients from millennia past had crafted the cursed object with sufficient care. Sukuna knew that Gojo Satoru would not die within it: his cursed energy and technique might suffer damage, but death was not an outcome.

That false sense of safety lulled him for a time, until he detected a fluctuation of cursed energy, one unbearably familiar, so faint that for a fleeting moment he even wondered whether Gojo Satoru had already reincarnated, whether that lingering trace was merely the echo of a new life inheriting the Six Eyes and Infinity. Such phenomena had occurred before, when the loss and transmission of powerful inherited techniques tipped the world's balance so hard that it triggered unconscious warning signals detectable by formidable

sorcerers.

The thought left Sukuna's mind hollow for several heartbeats, like a predator robbed of its prey before the first bite, or a beautifully carved wooden puppet purchased with anticipation only to break before it could be played with. But only for a few seconds, he dismissed the disturbance as interference from the brat Itadori, for Sukuna did not believe Gojo Satoru would meet his end in something so laughably anticlimactic. And so he ordered Uraume to mobilize their forces and track down the Six Eyes' presence. At the very least, they would find the brat's ashes in some forgotten corner of the world, so that Sukuna could drag them back and mock them thoroughly, for the sentimentality that had produced such a dull, inglorious death for an opponent who had once amused him so deeply.

In the end, fortunately, news arrived that the Six Eyes was still alive.

How exhilarated that brat Itadori had been at the thought of finally going to retrieve Gojo Satoru; exhilarated, and yet stupid enough to provoke Gojo Yuuta before the appointed day. Itadori still did not fully control the cursed imprint Sukuna had left behind; backlash during combat came all too easily, especially when facing someone like Gojo Yuuta. When Sukuna saw that black-haired boy arrive sword in hand, he had nearly stepped in to deal with the matter himself, recalling the bespectacled man's account that it was this very boy who had fastened the infamous Crimson Chain, the Chinese cursed tool that sealed cursed energy, onto Gojo Satoru's body. In the end, however, Sukuna stayed his hand, allowing brats to fight brats, never imagining that Itadori would prove so useless as to suffer genuine damage to his soul and be forced into dormancy to recover. Before losing consciousness, the boy had deliberately triggered their pact, compelling Sukuna to go in his stead to Shinjuku to retrieve Gojo Satoru - an infuriating inconvenience, yet one that bound Sukuna nonetheless, for a contract was a contract.

And so he found himself here now, crammed into a narrow human vehicle, watching the white leopard on the opposite side press himself back, coiled and wary, waiting for the moment to strike.

Earlier, when Sukuna and Uraume had used teleportation to slip into the bespectacled man's car, he had already spotted Gojo Satoru from afar, unmistakable thanks to that shock of silver hair that caught the eye even in a crowd. The brat had grown thinner, Sukuna noticed it at once, the wrist that had once landed a blow on him now seemed a size smaller, veins faintly visible beneath dark wool as the hand slid into

the pocket of a coat. Sukuna entered the car just moments after the Six Eyes had walked away; the distance had been close enough that, under normal circumstances, Satoru would have sensed him instantly, yet the brat never once turned his head, proof that the immense perception granted by cursed energy had been completely sealed away by the tool. Perhaps that was why Gojo Satoru no longer wore his blindfold; from within the car, Sukuna could see those blue eyes narrowing slightly as he watched the road, the corners curving faintly upward as if smiling, a smile Sukuna remembered all too clearly, one that had once been directed at Itadori when the brat first entered Jujutsu High.

He did not understand why he remembered that smile, nor why he suddenly wanted to see it again, to see whether it still resembled the one from that distant day. There were too many things he did not understand; all he knew was that, in the instant Gojo Satoru turned back and stepped into the car, Sukuna reflexively suppressed the markings across his body and did something he had never imagined himself doing - something humiliating even to contemplate.

He leaned forward, assuming Itadori's form, and spoke to Gojo Satoru.

"Sensei," he said softly, almost amused, "haven't you played enough already?"

But no smile came. The Six Eyes reacted instantly, shoving Sukuna's hand away as wariness flashed sharp and cold across that blue gaze. Gojo Satoru did not fall for it; nor could he have, really, when Itadori would never travel with Uraume at his side, nor allow Uraume to press a blade so casually against the bespectacled man's throat. He blurted out, almost involuntarily, *"Why are you here, Sukuna?"* and then, as if hearing the naked strain in his own voice, his jaw tightened, his eyes hardening as he forced himself to meet Sukuna's stare head-on.

The air inside the car thickened, congealing as Uraume drove faster still, tearing down the road with singular intent, ensuring that the Zenin brat would never catch up in time to complicate matters further. On the far side of the vehicle, the white leopard clenched his fists so tightly that Sukuna could see crescent marks bloom red where nails bit into pale skin.

The Gojo clan had always been famous for its beauty, though in earlier ages it was mostly the daughters of successive heads - women whose looks drew admirers, alliances, leverage. In Sukuna's time,

there had even been fools who dared kidnap Gojo women and offer them up as tribute, praising them as flawless jade and pristine snow. What Sukuna had not expected was that, in this era, such beauty would manifest in the very heir who carried the accumulated power of generations: skin so pale it bore marks at the slightest careless touch, features so finely cut that even fury could not fully erase the perverse aesthetic urge to see them ruined, violated, broken. Had such looks belonged to a weakling, that body would have been crushed beneath the ruthless lusts of the Three Great Families without mercy. For what strong man would not crave a beauty in his grasp - slender wrists gleaming white, a taut waist bowing helplessly beneath each touch, blue eyes filling with water as desire overtook defiance, like frost-white petals melting under a spring sun?

Fortunately - *fortunately*, Sukuna mused - the beauty was armored by an arrogance born of overwhelming strength, a sovereignty that stood above the masses and forced all who lusted after it to keep their distance, like cowardly hunters watching from afar as the white leopard ruled his territory with effortless disdain.

Of course, there were exceptions, Gojo Yuuta, Zenin Megumi, creatures arrogant enough to lay traps, to dream of claiming the Six Eyes as their own. And in doing so, they committed the same fatal error: believing they could dull the claws of a wild beast, tame the white leopard into a docile house pet. It was a fundamental misunderstanding, and the most catastrophic one of all, because this creature was never a cat, never a dependent animal meant for cages and laps. It was a leopard born for open plains, merely drawing its claws inward for now, waiting - patiently, inevitably - for the day it would tear its prison apart and escape.

The image of taming a white leopard stirred a sudden, feral exhilaration in Sukuna; he pressed his tongue against his canine until the metallic tang flooded his mouth, sharp and intoxicating. At the same time, he deliberately released a heavy surge of cursed energy inside the car, compressing the space until the air itself seemed to thicken and bow under pressure. He knew Gojo Satoru could no longer perceive cursed energy; but instinct was another matter, and survival did not require sight. As expected, Satoru lifted his gaze warily toward him, voice rasping through clenched teeth.

“What do you want?”

Sukuna did not answer right away. He simply watched the insolent brat a moment longer, letting the silence stretch and bite. Thinner,

indeed - his first impression had been correct. The limbs were leaner, the frame reduced, even the neck now strikingly slender. Cursed energy no longer circulated freely through that body, locked instead at the left wrist where a silver band gleamed: the famed Crimson Chain of China. The restraint made it difficult for Sukuna to tell how much cursed energy remained within the Six Eyes, but after the Prison Realm and the long months of control, it could not be much. Gojo Satoru was fortunate that the boy Yuuta had only uncovered a binding artifact - one that restrained without stripping power entirely - allowing scraps of residual energy to be gathered, exploited, turned into a chance at escape. Had it been the other legendary tool, the needle that siphoned cursed technique itself, then Gojo Satoru would have been reduced to a truly useless non-sorcerer, and the delicacy before Sukuna would have been nothing more than bland flesh, robbed of the exquisite seasoning of overwhelming cursed power.

Sukuna licked his lips without thinking, eyes lingering as Gojo Satoru's patience visibly frayed. And only when the brat seemed a breath away from snapping—reckless enough to charge even knowing it would mean his end, did Sukuna finally speak, tone lazy, almost indulgent.

"Aren't you planning to go to some damned place called Kuantan?" he drawled. "I'll take you there."

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Kuantan was a small, backwater stretch of land in Southeast Asia, remote, half-forgotten. In Sukuna's era, the place had scarcely been inhabited at all, known less for its people than for the inexplicably dense concentration of cursed energy that pooled there, making the cultivation of cursed medicine and the crafting of talismans unusually common. Itadori had told him there was a sea there now, that he had to bring Gojo Satoru to that shoreline - apparently the Six Eyes brat's wish, according to what that bespectacled messenger had relayed. The flight itself was short enough that Sukuna could afford to be bored; he slept through most of it, and by the time he opened his eyes again, Uraume had already made the arrangements to deliver them to a hotel. As always, Uraume was efficient - reliably so, Sukuna thought, not without a trace of satisfaction, for he had taken the servant in hundreds of years ago for precisely this reason. He had never cared

much for entourages: the truly strong had no need for flocks of attendants, while those who clung to crowds only did so because they were too weak to stand alone. Uraume, however, had proven their worth time and again - preparing offerings to his taste, keeping their presence discreet enough not to irritate him, especially compared to the clamorous rabble that so often surrounded power. It was precisely because of this long record of usefulness that Sukuna had entrusted them with matters without question for centuries. And yet, a faint crease formed between his brows now, because lately, Uraume seemed to have forgotten where their place truly lay.

It had happened just the day before, when Uraume proposed arranging a shrine for devil-worshippers in Kuantan as a resting place, one Sukuna himself had favored on his occasional excursions centuries past. Ordinarily, he would have let them handle such preparations without comment, but remembering his agreement with Itadori to deliver the Six Eyes safely to Kuantan, he paused, reconsidered, and then changed his mind.

“Arrange human lodging instead.”

Under normal circumstances, Uraume would have bowed, answered at once, and withdrawn to carry out the order. But for some reason, that day, Sukuna heard no immediate acknowledgment. He lifted his gaze, frowning slightly, and saw hesitation flicker across his servant’s face. One brow arched as he waited.

“My lord… why concern yourself with the Six Eyes?”

It was the first time Uraume had ever dared to question him outright. Though the voice trembled with ingrained submission, the act itself brushed dangerously close to defiance. Sensing Sukuna’s displeasure, Uraume immediately dropped to their knees, yet still forced the words out.

“You once said that once you fully controlled Itadori’s body, the first thing you would do was kill the Six Eyes. Then why show mercy now —”

They never finished the sentence. Sukuna’s patience snapped; with a flick of his hand, a blade of cursed energy - thin, precise, merciless - shot forward. Uraume did not dodge, nor would they have dared to, for evading punishment would only invite something far worse. The blade cut cleanly through flesh, blood splattering across the floor at Sukuna’s feet. He stepped back at once, irritation plain on his face as

he avoided the stain, then turned away, his robe snapping softly with the motion.

“I have no need for a dog that does not know how to obey.”

Last night’s burst of anger had driven Uraume neatly back into their old, familiar boundaries; by morning, they had prepared a room right by the shores of Kuantan, its architecture echoing the ancient styles of an era when Sukuna’s power had stood at its zenith, and it was there that they brought Sukuna and Gojo Satoru. From the flight itself to the taxi ride that carried them to their lodging, the Six Eyes never once relaxed that wary, animal vigilance in his gaze, watching both of them as though they were predators whose distance he had to measure at every breath. More than once, Sukuna caught the faint flick of those eyes toward the outside world, calculating the odds of escape, only to see the gaze return inward again when the calculation inevitably reached the same conclusion: *absolute failure* —and settle instead on its enemy with renewed caution. From morning, when they first crossed paths, through the long arc of evening after traversing half of Asia, that guarded tension never wavered, until the moment they entered the room and Gojo Satoru realized that, in the spacious top-floor suite, there was only a *single* bed.

Then the sharp edge in those clear blue eyes shifted - confusion first, then a brief, searching hesitation, and finally a tightening of understanding as he snapped his gaze back to Sukuna. He resisted, striving to hold onto a posture of strength, but his body betrayed him all the same: shoulders drawing inward, spine dipping slightly, an instinctive recoil from the shared bed he clearly despised, and the reaction of a cornered wild creature only sharpened Sukuna’s amusement. He licked his lips and advanced, step by deliberate step, driving the white-haired man backward until pale legs struck the frame of the bed and Six Eyes fell onto it. Silver hair spilled across white sheets, refusing to blend in, only gleaming more sharply under the night lights filtering through the window, while the dim glow softened the exquisite lines of his face into something almost unreal: beautiful, arrogant, and faintly demonic all at once.

Sukuna leaned over him, bracing his hands on either side of the Six Eyes’ head, watching as a slender arm lifted to push him away, only to falter midair. Gojo Satoru tilted his head aside instead, exposing the pale color of his throat, and when Sukuna reached out to press his fingers to the pulse beneath the ear, along that fragile stretch of skin at the nape, the body beneath him flinched despite itself. Moisture shimmered in blue eyes - those two brats had *trained* him well so Six

Eyes was not that *seductive*, it seemed - but the tears were swallowed back with stubborn resolve as clenched teeth forced out a challenge.

“So even the great King of Curses wants *a share of me* now?”

A clever provocation, Sukuna thought, calling himself prey and implying that Sukuna was merely the one arriving late to pick at scraps, a deliberate attempt to sap his desire to conquer. Did the Six Eyes truly think words like that would make him retreat?

“I can bargain with you,” Gojo Satoru pressed on before Sukuna could answer. “Even a Curse King has to pay before eating cake, doesn’t he?” The resistance in his gaze sharpened into open provocation as he let tears gather deliberately at the corners of his eyes, narrowing them just enough to turn that look into something dangerously alluring, scratching at the nerves of anyone who met it.

“And what, exactly, would you trade with me?” Sukuna asked, tilting his head in interest as his fingers pressed more firmly at the throat, testing the way the body arched in response - yet instead of evading, it yielded, pliant as though humoring him, like a beautiful housecat at last.

“Promise you’ll accept the bargain first,” the Six Eyes murmured, curling an arm around Sukuna’s shoulder, nestling his head against the chest beneath the kimono with disarming docility, before lifting pink lips to whisper against Sukuna’s ear and letting himself fall back onto the bed. With that motion, his collar slipped open, revealing a swath of pale, weary skin, the two red marks at his throat standing out like ink stains on priceless porcelain - marks that invited both the urge to cleanse them away and the far more violent desire to add new ones by one's own teeth. Sukuna felt his throat dry, but he crushed the heat down just as swiftly, pulling away instead and drawing the blanket over the slight body beneath him.

“I have no interest in the weak,” he said coolly, patting the face peeking out from the covers. “Come to me when you’re strong again, and then you can pay me back.” His gaze sharpened, voice lowering. “For now, I’ll deal with the cursed drug in your body.”

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The process of purging the cursed drug proved unexpectedly straightforward, largely because the Zenin clan's meticulous cursecraft, combined with the fact that the blood of those two brats had lingered in Gojo Satoru's body for far too long, had produced a peculiar kind of fusion within the Six Eyes' flesh. Layered atop that was the Crimson Chain, sealing his cursed energy and utterly dismantling his body's natural resistance, leaving it helplessly exposed, a wide-open field for the drug's rampage. Sukuna had weighed several methods while observing the white-haired brat during the flight to Kuantan, and in the end chose the most direct solution: forcing a small, biting curse spirit straight into Gojo Satoru's bloodstream, commanding it to hunt down the drug's traces and annihilate them the instant it found them, dissolving them under his own cursed energy.

The idea itself sounded simple, but the execution demanded an almost absurd level of precision—any lapse in control would shred blood vessels from within—and it inflicted agony so severe that even high-ranking sorcerers would struggle to endure it. Deprived of cursed-energy reinforcement, Gojo Satoru's body was weaker than it had ever been, wholly unprepared to withstand pain of that magnitude. The shock drove him to bite down on his lip without thinking, the thin pink flesh bruising into a vivid red. It would have been beautiful, Sukuna thought absently, if only blood had not welled there. He loved blood, revelled in it, in the warmth of it, in the act of carving into resisting bodies and bathing in the lifeblood of powerful foes. Yet for reasons he could not immediately name, the sight of Gojo Satoru bleeding displeased him.

That faint irritation drew a frown from the King of Curses, but the answer came quickly enough: the Six Eyes was too weak now; better to let him recover his strength and deal with him properly later. Satisfied with that explanation, Sukuna manifested another arm and raised it before the trembling, white-haired brat.

"Here," he said, voice low and unyielding. "Bite this."

Perhaps the pain had clouded the Six Eyes' mind so thoroughly that he no longer had the strength to question anything at all; he merely opened his mouth obediently and bit down on the hand Sukuna held out before him. White teeth met bronze-hued flesh, so faint and tentative that they failed to leave even the slightest mark, though Sukuna had deliberately withdrawn the cursed markings from his arm to avoid any risk of backlash should the boy touch them. The reinforced body of the cursed womb, perfected through countless

incarnations, felt no pain from the bite - only a faint, ticklish sensation blooming in his palm, mingled with the rasp of hurried, heated breaths brushing against his skin.

The curse spirit had already locked onto the trail of the two droplets of tainted blood and surged forward with renewed speed, driving them to race through Gojo Satoru's body ever faster, and with that acceleration the pain multiplied relentlessly. Sukuna saw the Six Eyes' brows knit together, and the vague irritation that had lingered in him since moments ago rose again, compelling him to reach out and smooth his thumb lightly between those furrowed brows. The boy seemed soothed by the touch, enough that Sukuna found himself continuing circling his fingers in small, slow motions over that face, until the sharp edge of agony gradually softened across the pale skin now slick with sweat.

At some point, pain entwined with that unexpected gentleness loosened the Six Eyes' vigilance, and he slipped into sleep without either of them quite noticing when it happened. His mouth still clung to the third hand Sukuna had offered, his head nestling instinctively against Sukuna's chest as if in a lingering echo of his earlier provocation, except that now the sleeping face held only an innocence so complete it bordered on harmless. Perhaps it was that very harmlessness that left Sukuna inexplicably holding Gojo Satoru still, because each time he tried to set him down on the bed, the white-haired nuisance reflexively clung to him instead.

Sukuna shifted his posture, moving to sit more securely, and without quite understanding why, moderated his strength, adjusting minutely in search of a more comfortable position. After a while, he realized there was no such thing as comfort with a troublesome bundle of white hair in his arms, and so the King of Curses unfolded his inviolable domain.

Layer upon layer of white bone rose to encircle the shrine, forming the vast throne of the sovereign - a seat he had claimed and ruled from for centuries. Sukuna shifted again, ascending to the exalted heights of that throne with the Six Eyes sleeping heavily in his grasp, while he himself remained awake through the long night, keeping vigil without knowing why.

Chapter 7: Yuuji | Broken

Yuuji stirred awake in a strangely warm haze.

Ever since he was young, he had known his body temperature ran higher than other people's - back then he had assumed it was simply because he exercised so much, and only later, after stepping into the world of jujutsu, did he understand that it was a byproduct of a body reinforced by the cursed womb. But having a higher body temperature did not mean that he woke up every morning wrapped in warmth like this. Even without opening his eyes, damn it - the wound Yuta had left him still throbbed dully in his head - Yuuji felt as though a massive heater had been placed squarely on his chest, radiating a heat so intense it made his skin itch. And it wasn't just a surface sensation: that hot, living warmth seemed to seep straight through his flesh, burrowing deeper, brushing against the very soul that was still in the midst of recovering.

Yuuji wanted to open his eyes, to see exactly what was lying on top of him, but his sluggish body still refused to obey his mind. The battle with Okkotsu Yuuta had left a serious wound on Yuuji's soul; even though Sukuna had stepped in to stabilize the damage, that single slash had still forced him into a state of hibernation, an enforced retreat meant to accelerate recovery. Yuuji loathed this condition with a fervor, because hibernation was never just sleep: it stripped him of control over his own body and sealed away all his senses until he was almost fully healed. He had endured it once before, after the final battle with Kenjaku, when he spent an entire week in complete sensory oblivion, followed by a long, humiliating day of regaining his faculties piece by piece: consciousness returning first, fragmentary and unreliable, leaving him with only scattered memories and no command over his limbs for hours on end. Touch came next; sensation crept back through his skin, while memory and the rest of his senses lagged stubbornly behind. It was exactly like this moment now: Yuuji could feel warmth spreading across his flesh, and somewhere in the back of his mind he sensed that there was a reason for it, yet no matter how frantically he rummaged through his memories, he couldn't grasp the answer. Soon, smell and hearing would follow; he would begin to catch the sounds around him, to breathe in the scent lingering in the air. And only at the very end would sight return, along with the full weight of his memories. It was a slow, drawn-out process, and it left Yuuji deeply unsettled, because he had the vague pressing sense that there was something he needed to do, something

urgent, yet his memories felt locked away behind a sealed door. He strained against it, pushing, pounding, kicking at the barrier with everything he had, but the door did not so much as tremble.

While he was still struggling to force his memories back into place, a tingling sensation crept across his overheated skin: the source of warmth draped over him seemed to move. The heat shifted erratically across his chest, like an irritable cat stirring in its sleep, and every so often a cool, fleeting brush skimmed over his sternum, sending a shiver through Yuuji's entire body. Hair, he realized it dimly then, the coolness against his chest was hair. Someone was lying in his arms, someone whose body radiated heat, restless and unruly against him like a cat in need of proper discipline. Cats smelled sweet, Yuuji thought as his sense of smell finally returned. The scent was achingly familiar, yet he still couldn't remember who it belonged to—sweet to the point of cloying, like cotton candy on the verge of melting on his tongue, and he swallowed reflexively, his mouth suddenly *dry* with the desire to taste it. That hunger, sparked by scent alone, spread through his body and slid straight down to a place south of his body.

His lower body hardened in eager response to the stimulation caused by the small creature writhing against him. Yuuji swore to God he wasn't the type to be aroused at any time, anywhere, like some newly pubescent kid, but the heat pressing into him and that sweetness in the air were intoxicating, and, honestly, it had been a long time since he'd taken care of his sexual energy. He had no idea which bastards from some fallen clan had sent a courtesan here to serve him and Sukuna, nor why Sukuna had allowed this person to remain through the night, but Yuuji knew one thing for certain: once he fully woke up and dealt with this problem, he was going to put an end to this filthy practice of offering people up to his bed for good-

At that very moment, a faint moan reached Yuuji's ears. His hearing had just returned, and the first thing his eardrums caught was a soft, sweet, stifled sound. It was quiet, as though its owner had tried with all their might to hold it back and failed all the same. The sound carried a damp, soaked quality - tears, perhaps, shed when instinct finally slipped its leash. The moment it slid into his hearing, it flowed straight *south*, and his cock swelled yet another degree. The beast there felt like a dragon, overheated and straining to burst its cage, eager to tear apart the wandering fool who had dared awaken a dragon's appetite. Yuuji still couldn't fully control his body, but instinct drove him to thrust his hips upward, to press that heavy presence into somewhere, anywhere, that might sate his raw, destructive urge.

The sudden movement made the small moan hitch and break off. Rustle, rustle, Yuuji heard the sounds of movement from a slender body nestled against him. While he was still wondering what the body might be doing, something impossibly soft brushed against the overheated bulge in his trousers. That softness moved rhythmically, up and down, occasionally rubbing directly against the stone-hard tip beneath the thin fabric, drawing a sharp breath from him and pulling a louder sound from his own throat in response. Only then did Yuuji realize that that someone was straddling him, using what was very likely a round, full backside to rock against his already rigid length. The scent in the air grew even sweeter, as though a giant cloud of cotton candy were floating around them. That cotton candy melted with every gentle roll of hips, rubbing against him like a cat in heat, desperate to be played with. Yuuji wasn't fond of sweets, and yet he found himself maddened with the urge to bite deep into that cotton candy, to take revenge for the way his aching hardness was being toyed with. He would shove the little kitten down onto the bed, drive himself deep inside as punishment for daring to play with fire, and then savor the kitten in his armsthrough the long night, until that radiant silver hair and those sky-blue eyes could hold nothing but his scent--

Wait, silver hair, sky-blue eyes.

Yuuji realized that he was beginning to remember someone, and the very act of remembering only sharpened his longing. Silver hair, blue eyes; as yearning surged in his chest like a wave that threatened to drown him, he understood that he loved this person deeply - *loved* them, and *desired* them, beyond reason. Yet braided into that boundless affection was the sharp, unpleasant thorn of jealousy. His memories had not fully returned, so he couldn't recall why jealousy tormented him so cruelly; he only knew that his resentment toward anyone who dared touch this person sent his blood boiling with a hunger for violence, an urge to tear into those who would dare show them disrespect using nothing but raw, physical force; no cursed energy, no cursed spirits, just flesh and bone against flesh and bone.

Fists answering fists - that had always been Yuuji's way of dealing with those who crossed the line. It had been that way since he was a child, his first instinct always to solve problems with violence. Fortunately, his grandfather and the advice to "use your strength to protect others" had guided him onto a better path as he grew. But the Culling Game came, and with it loss after loss, and the bright optimism his grandfather had planted in his heart began to wither. Yuuji came to understand that he could not save everyone, because

sacrifice was inevitable, an unyielding balance woven into the fabric of the world itself. He learned that he would have to choose between countless lives in need of saving. And in the end, through it all, he chose to protect *his god*, even if the price was millions of lives. That awareness, the notion of a god, made Yuuji's hazy memories grow clearer. The wanderer in his mind felt his way through the fog, reaching out to search for the shape of his god in some distant memory, letting his love serve as a guiding light through the long night of loss and exile, until he could finally kneel, to worship, to revere that god once more.

This thought left Yuuji feeling unsettled in a way he couldn't immediately explain. At this very moment, his erection was rigid and aching, brought on by the stimulation of a mischievous little body rocking its hips against his lower body through a thin layer of fabric, each slow, deliberate motion fanning the flames of desire. He could feel sexual hunger flooding his mind, driving him into a near-maddened urge to possess, to claim. Given the exalted status of the divine God being he held enshrined in his heart, he should have been overwhelmed with guilt for entertaining such thoughts while being dragged under by lust and craving. And yet, as he sifted through his hazy, incomplete memories, Yuuji found no sense of contradiction at all in holding the god he cherished, whom he worshipped and revered, alongside the screaming demand for release pulsing in his cock, as though from the very beginning these two forces, which should have stood in opposition, had always been layered together within him.

That realization gave rise to a dangerously bold thought: perhaps the version of himself with his memories fully intact had always wanted to stain the god, to press the divine body down beneath his own, to make that sacred form open itself to his claim and be ruined by his hands. The thought made him throb harder still, his thrusts against the plush, rounded curve beneath him growing more forceful, drawing increasingly desperate, pleading sounds from the little kitten in his hands.

Then, suddenly, the soft pressure against his groin disappeared. Before he could even question it, Yuuji felt his trousers being tugged down. The dragon was freed from its restraints, springing out, proud and fully erect. Cool morning air brushed against the sensitive tip, but almost immediately a warm breath followed, and then the monstrous length was engulfed within a hot, wet mouth. *Fuck*, Yuuji cursed silently as pleasure crashed over him so abruptly that he arched up, instinctively seeking more. He pushed the strange unease to the back of his mind, focusing instead on the sensation of being tightly

enclosed, on the broken, muffled whimpers spilling out in ragged intervals. He could feel a soft, heated tongue sliding along him from tip to base, and when that small mouth worked at the head, he became aware of a hand stroking along his sac, then running up and down his length in a steady, coaxing rhythm.

Yuuji's entire body went numb with sensation. Sukuna might have been accustomed to such service, but Yuuji's own sexual experience extended no further than a few clumsy encounters with girls he'd known in middle school: awkward, inexperienced, never particularly skilled. The slender body giving him hed now was likely no more practiced, judging by the fumbling hands and the needy, broken sobs forced from him, but at the very least, he seemed to have been *trained*. The mouth moved ceaselessly, rising and falling, forcing Yuuji's mind - still struggling to recover its memories - to stall completely, surrendering itself to the overwhelming pleasure of the moment. When the hot mouth finally opened wide, letting Yuuji's cock slide deep into his throat, then drew back inch by inch before closing his lips again and swallowing him down once more, soft, animalistic whimpers spilled free. Yuuji felt his sac tighten, his toes go numb, and a flash of white light burst behind his eyes as he spilled into the warm, enclosing mouth.

Yuuji opened his eyes. His vision returned. And with it, his memories.

The wound Yuta had given him. The request he had made of Sukuna. White hair. Blue eyes. The slender in his arms.

Everything fell into place.

Yuuji lowered his gaze and saw a beautiful man kneeling beneath him, breath coming in ragged gasps, sobbing softly like a bullied kitten, his flushed face smeared with milky white traces.

It was Gojo Satoru - soaked in desire, marked through and through by Itadori Yuuji.

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The moment his gaze met those blue eyes, a thousand violent emotions surged through Yuuji all at once, boiling through his veins, his bloodstream, down to the smallest cells of his body. Foremost

among them was longing, because it had been more than a thousand days since he had last seen his teacher, since the sudden catastrophe of Shibuya tore Satoru from his grasp without a word of farewell, at a time when Yuuji was still too young, too powerless, to bring him back. Those thousand days of yearning became the force that drove him to grow, step by step: to fight Sukuna for control of his own body, to build a power of his own, to stand in opposition to the newly formed Twin Great Families of Megumi and Yuta, all so that he might one day possess the means, the manpower, and the strength required to fight against the Prison Realm. Every step of that path was impossibly difficult for a sixteen-year-old Yuuji, yet each of them was carried out, one by one, by a nineteen-year-old Yuuji who refused to stop, all for the single wish of rescuing and reclaiming the man he had lost.

A thousand days - each one a point in time upon which Yuuji laid down his effort and his flesh as offerings at a divine altar, praying that the heavens might show mercy and allow a mortal to find a god lost among the human world. A thousand days - also a thousand nights in which the worshipper carried that god into his sleep, aching to find him, yearning to protect him in return for the way Satoru had once protected him at the very beginning. A thousand days - the initial reverence deepening, intensifying, until it planted within him a seed of love. *If only I had held on to him. If only I had protected him. If only I could see him again. If only he were mine.* As time passed, those thoughts grew increasingly transgressive, and no matter how hard Yuuji tried, he could no longer suppress the desire to take the god into his arms, to pull him down from the altar and shelter him within the warmth of his own love.

So long as he could remain by Satoru's side and love him, Yuuji believed that would be enough. He had once thought so, sincerely convinced that a one-sided love could satisfy the heart's deepest desires. Until the day he discovered that Satoru had awakened, and had awakened in the arms of Yuuta and Megumi.

Yuuji still remembered with painful clarity the way his pulse had thundered in his ears, pounding like a war drum, when he learned what those two damned men had been doing to his teacher. One had shattered the divine altar and imprisoned the god upon it; the other had broken the god's wings, forcing him to learn how to live as a pampered pet within a gilded cage of iron and gold. Rage blurred Yuuji's vision, and jealousy took on a tangible form, tearing free from the cocoon of his mortal flesh, hungering to devour those treacherous apostles whole. In that very moment, Yuuji understood: the best way to remain beside a god was not worship alone, but *power*. If he had

had enough power, no one like Kenjaku would ever again be able to take Satoru to a place beyond his reach. If he had had enough power, no one like Yuuta or Megumi would dare to monopolize a god within a net of heaven and earth. If he had had enough poweh, he could step up to the altar himself, become the god's guardian, and shield Satoru from the filthy desires of the world.

Pain drove him forward. Day after day, night after night, longing filled his chest to the brim. And so, in the moment he finally saw Satoru again, after countless nights spent dreaming of their reunion, Yuuji bent down without hesitation and pulled him into a tight, desperate embrace.

"Sensei…" he murmured, burying his face in the silver hair, his voice reverent, as though it might shatter at any moment. Yuuji had once imagined he would say so many things when they met again: how much he loved him, how deeply he had missed him, how he would swear never to let harm come to him again. No matter that Satoru was the strongest jujutsu sorcerer alive, Yuuji would become stronger still, stronger than the very word *strongest,* so he could shield him from the filth of the world beyond. He had wanted to say everything, yet in the end only a soft *"sensei"* remained. Yuuji drew in a deep breath, filling his lungs with Satoru's sweet scent, his arms tightening around bare skin as he felt the body in his hold shudder and tremble in small, broken waves.

Trembling - only then did Yuuji realize something was wrong with the Gojo Satoru before him. His skin was flushed, his gaze lifted toward Yuuji unfocused and hazy, as though he had no awareness of who stood in front of him at all. The sexual memories from minutes earlier came rushing back, crashing into Yuuji's mind after the joy of reunion had briefly overwhelmed everything else. When the pieces fell into place, he understood: the one who had knelt between his legs during those final moments of soul recovery was Gojo Satoru himself. Gojo Satoru - the strongest sorcerer, heir to one of the three most ancient clans, the heavens' favored child, spoiled beyond measure - had only moments ago been kneeling before him, fevered, serving him with that small, beautiful mouth.

The thought made *Yuuji* stir again, hardening as though that first release had never happened at all. His arousal brushed against Satoru's soft flesh, and it was as if Satoru sensed it instantly. He arched his back, rolling his hips down against Yuuji's, arms sliding up to cling around Yuuji's neck, tear-filled eyes lifting in a pleading gaze. "Want...want to be *filled,* please…"

It had to be a lingering aftereffect of the cursed blood Yuuta and Megumi had left inside him to break and tame him. Yuuji remembered the fury that had seized him when he learned those two bastards had dared to use the Zenin's methods of training sexual slaves on Satoru. After learning where his teacher was, Yuuji had asked Sukuna to craft a small curse spirit to purge the cursed blood, but perhaps remnants of the aphrodisiac curse still resisted eradication, continuing to inflame Satoru's instincts. The torment of it had stripped Satoru of reason, Yuuji realized, seeing nothing but lust-clouded fog in those blue eyes. Satoru writhed atop him, his upper body flushed a delicate pink, his lower half clearly soaked as he rocked against Yuuji in desperate, aching motions.

"Please… let fill me…"

"Do you know who I am, Sensei Satoru?" Yuuji held his hips in place, forcing himself to steady that slender waist so it would stop provoking him, clinging desperately to the last scraps of reason he wished Satoru still had. With one hand, he lifted Satoru's face, making him look straight into his eyes. "It's Yuuji. I'm Yuuji. Do you recognize me, Sensei?"

The haze in those intoxicated eyes flickered, just briefly, with a spark of light. "Yuuji…" Pink lips shaped his name, the syllables breaking apart with a small, helpless whimper. The sound alone made something in Yuuji tighten further. "Yuuji…" The name came again, as though Satoru were fighting through the fog of desire, trying to reach for the memory of his student somewhere far away.

But the struggle ended almost as soon as it began. The light vanished. Satoru slipped free of Yuuji's restraining hand and leaned in close, pressing those soft lips to Yuuji's ear.

"Yuuji… Yuuji… play with Satoru, okay?"

The wet heat of his breath curling around Yuuji's name snapped the last remaining thread of restraint in his mind.

Yuuji seized the back of Satoru's neck and bent down, crushing him into a deep, bruising kiss. Teeth sank into Satoru's lower lip, the sharp taste of iron blooming as blood was drawn, opening the way for Yuuji's tongue to invade that warm mouth, to explore every inch of the body that had been kneeling at his feet only moments ago. The aphrodisiac curse had Satoru responding eagerly, drunk on sensation - he even wrapped his legs around Yuuji's hips, guiding that soaked

heat against Yuuji's bare, stone-hard length.

It was an unmistakable invitation to Yuuji as those slender fingers reached down to his cock, moving with practiced ease, stroking up and down until he was so hard it bordered on pain. It took only a few small touches for Satoru to set his entire body ablaze, as though he had never found release even once before. A sudden thought struck Yuuji - that the teacher who had once been painfully awkward about intimacy had become this adept at servicing another man only because Megumi and Yuta had *trained* him into it.

The thought flooded him with fury. His lips moved of their own accord, trailing downward as his teeth sank deep into the pale column of Satoru's throat, then into his full chest, leaving behind bruising bites that nearly drew blood. Before long, the red would darken into purple, blooming into marks that would linger on the mortal body of the god who had just descended into the human world, irrefutable proof of Yuuji's love, and of the fact that this god belonged to him, and to him alone.

Satoru seemed unconcerned with the pain. Behind the curtain of white hair, those beautiful blue eyes were filled only with unfulfilled desire. He arched toward Yuuji, grinding desperately, trying to rub that wet, aching place against him, openly inviting Yuuji to enter, to claim and break him open.

"Yuuji… Yuuji… please, enter me," the beautiful man beneath him whispered his name as though his very life depended on it.

Yuuji could no longer restrain himself. His hand slid down to explore a body that had long since been soaked. Satoru's legs parted instinctively, his hips rolling in silent encouragement, coaxing Yuuji to fill the empty cavern inside him. When the third finger slipped in, Satoru let out a sweet cry, like a small animal in heat. Yuuji didn't wait any longer - he bent forward and forced Satoru to take all of him in a single thrust of his hip.

Mine.

Yuuji murmured the words into Satoru's ear as his hips drove all the way in, thrusting to the deepest point inside him. Satoru's hole clasped around him like a small, eager mouth, actively swallowing him down, surrendering to the pleasure of both their bodies. With every thrust, Yuuji could feel Satoru opening and closing around him, sobbing because of him, for him. Yuuji picked up the pace, driving in

deeper and harder with a brutal snap of his hips, making Satoru arch and cry out.

“It’s too deep—Satoru’s so full—”

The obscene words made Yuuji’s eyes burn red with lust and anger alike. He flipped Satoru over roughly, forcing him face-down into the pillow, knees spread, hips raised high. His hand came down hard against Satoru’s ass, leaving behind a vivid red handprint. Satoru cried out, but the sound carried far more pleasure than pain. *Sensei likes this*, Yuuji realized, feeling himself clamped even tighter each time another strike landed.

Seeing the one he loved writhing in pleasure only made Yuuji go on even fuller force. He thrust relentlessly from behind as Satoru truly knelt on all fours, mewling like a cat in heat. Flesh slapped against flesh, loud and wet, especially when Satoru pushed back eagerly to meet him. A cruel impulse seized Yuuji - he suddenly slowed, teasing, letting himself brush against the most sensitive point without quite touching it.

Deprived of the brutal assault, his sensei turned back in confusion, looking at him with those blue eyes soaked through with tears. He rocked his hips, searching for more stimulation where their bodies met. But Satoru quickly realized that he alone moving was not enough, and turned back again, mewling softly to ask for his master.

“Yuuji, move… please…”

Yuuji caught his chin, fingers sliding into that small mouth. “Say it, Satoru. Who is the one that can satisfy you?”

“Yuuji - Satoru is Yuuji's”

The god of the jujutsu world surrendered completely to desire, yielding without hesitation. That was all Yuuji needed. He turned Satoru over so they were face to face, lifting his legs into an M-shape, spreading him wider and opening the entrance deeper. As his hips drove in again and again, Yuuji bent down to bite at the already stiffened nipples. Satoru arched his neck back, pleasure tearing through him until his tongue nearly slipped loose between flushed lips.

His beautiful body was covered in blooming red marks, dazzling like a treasure offered from some distant western land of the jujutsu world.

The room was filled with nothing but the sounds of flesh meeting flesh and Satoru's unrestrained moans. Yuuji thrust into him while pinching and teasing his nipples.
"Satoru's being so loud like this. If you keep going, the whole world will know you're my little cat in heat."

Satoru's reason was completely gone, instinct taking over as he obediently repeated Yuuji's words—"yours," "Yuuji's."

Even knowing these weren't Satoru's true feelings, Yuuji still felt a warmth bloom in his chest. Unable to hold back, he gripped Satoru's hips and drove into him hard for the final stretch. Just before climax hit, Yuuji pulled out and spilled across Satoru's chest and stomach, leaving streaks of opaque white against porcelain skin.

His body drenched in sweat and dizzy with release, Yuuji collapsed forward, holding the body trembling from aftershocks. The slick, sticky sensation clung to them, but Yuuji kept holding him, gently kissing the reddened lips of his dear sensei who slipped into exhausted sleep in his arms. Only when he finally pulled back did Yuuji look down at the marks he had left behind- bite marks tinged with blood on the neck, bruised handprints on the hips, wrists reddened from being held tight, skin left without a single unmarked place, covered in kisses.

The god he used to worship now looked like a shattered porcelain doll, chest rising with shallow, weary breaths.

Yuuji realized then that no matter how much he despised Yuuta and Megumi, he had become just like them - stepping onto the same path as those who sought to drag a god down from the altar and keep the broken pieces bound to the mortal world.

Chapter 8: Satoru | Choice

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Satoru wakes up to salt.

Not the sharp sting of pain, not the iron tang of blood, but just salt, faint and clean, clinging to the air like the residue of a sea that has already retreated, as though the room itself once stood at the shoreline and has been left behind with nothing but the memory of waves it can no longer hear. The space around him breathes in slow, deliberate intervals: curtains shifting in a rhythm too steady to be natural, pale morning light slipping through the narrow gaps between wooden slats in thin, careful lines, the distant hush of water dissolving into silence before it can fully become sound. For a long while he does not move, does not open his eyes, simply allows consciousness to seep back into him piece by piece, settling into his bones with the wary patience of something returning to a body it no longer fully trusts, as if the flesh beneath him might reject him the moment he acknowledges it as his own.

It does not.

It aches, but luckily, it is still his.

The ache does not announce itself sharply; it unfolds in layers, spreading outward rather than striking inward. His hips are sore in a way that speaks of strain rather than injury, a deep, lingering discomfort that tightens when he shifts even slightly, while his thighs tremble faintly under their own weight, as though they are still remembering how to hold him upright. His wrists carry a low, persistent burn where hands had once pressed too firmly, too insistently, the sensation not quite pain and not quite gone, like the ghost of pressure refusing to release its claim. Beneath it all sits a dull, simmering heat low in his belly, neither sharp enough to demand attention nor gentle enough to ignore, a warmth that tightens his breath when he moves and leaves behind the unmistakable impression of something unfinished, something that did not end simply because consciousness returned. His skin feels too awake, nerves stripped of their usual distance, every brush of air registering as though the world has been turned several degrees too loud, every sensation arriving without the buffer he once took for granted. Worse than the pain,

worse even than the hypersensitivity, is what lingers beneath it. Something that no longer belongs to him, but has not yet learned how to leave.

Satoru closes his eyes.

Fragments surface without his consent, sharp-edged and unkind, refusing to arrange themselves into a single narrative. A voice, low and unsteady, saying his name as though it were both prayer and confession. Hands which were too careful in some places, not careful enough in others moving with a hesitation that made the moments of certainty feel heavier, more deliberate. The press of another body, solid and inescapable. The sound he made when he should not have been able to make any sound at all, dragged out of him by something chemical and something far more human, tangled together too tightly to separate without tearing something vital apart.

Shame flickers, but it does not take root for long. That, more than anything, unsettles him.

Once was a time, before cages, before seals, before being passed between hands that claimed to know what was best for him, shame would have come easily, would have cut deep and clean and left him bleeding quietly behind a smile he perfected for exactly that purpose. Now it rises slower, dulled by exhaustion, weighed down by a growing indifference toward his own ruin that surprises him with its steadiness. He knows what he must look like without needing to see it: skin marked in gradients of red and purple, teeth-prints blooming along his throat and collarbone, bruises darkening his hips and wrists like fingerprints left by someone who needed proof he had been here, that this had happened, that he had not simply slipped through their grasp like everything else.

A god reduced to evidence.

The thought should sting, but it does not. If anything, it slides off him with the same careless ease as everything else that has been taken these past months, and that absence of reaction. The way he cannot bring himself to care as deeply as he knows he should settles heavier in his chest than guilt ever could. He is not numb. He is not calm. He is simply tired in a way that makes self-reproach feel inefficient, almost pointless, as though even that would require a level of investment he no longer possesses.

Someone is sitting beside the bed. He knows before the mattress shifts,

before breath reaches him, before guilt announces itself in the stiff restraint of a body trying very hard not to exist too loudly. The presence bypasses his senses entirely and settles directly into his awareness, familiar in the way gravity is familiar - unavoidable, always there, whether acknowledged or not.

Yuuji.

Satoru opens his eyes.

Yuuji is exactly where Satoru knew he would be: close enough to reach him without effort, far enough not to touch, hands clasped together as if restraint alone might undo what has already been done. His shoulders are held tight, not with readiness but with something closer to self-punishment, his posture rigid in the way of someone bracing for impact that has already occurred. He looks as though he has not slept, or has slept only in fragments, waking each time the memory returned sharper, clearer, less willing to soften.

Satoru watches him for a moment longer than necessary, cataloguing guilt the way he once catalogued threats, methodically, without sentiment, and then speaks, his voice rough from disuse but steady all the same. “Yuuji.”

“S—Sensei—”

The word slips out before he can catch it, raw and unguarded, stripped of the caution he had been clinging to since the moment Satoru’s breathing evened out again, and the instant it leaves his mouth Yuuji visibly recoils, as though the sound itself has struck him somewhere vital, somewhere already bruised by too many sleepless hours and too much self-loathing. His shoulders jerk back, his spine stiffening as if he has just realized how exposed he is, how little right he has to speak at all, and his hands curl reflexively into the bedding as though he might anchor himself there and keep from unraveling completely.

Satoru turns his head fully then, slow and unhurried, meeting Yuuji’s gaze with an expression that is, infuriatingly, almost neutral, not kind, not cold, not accusing, but calm in a way that feels far more dangerous than anger would have been, as though he has already stepped past the place where outrage lives.

“You’re awake,” he says lightly, voice a little rough at the edges but otherwise steady, composed enough to sound almost casual, as if this were an ordinary morning following an ordinary night, as if the space

between them were not crowded with everything that has not yet been said, with everything Yuuji is choking on.

That casualness hurts more than fury ever could.

Yuuji pushes himself away in a rush. His hands clench into fists at his sides, knuckles whitening as if to keep them from reaching out uninvited, unearned, while his eyes flick over Satoru with open panic, cataloguing every visible mark, every shadow beneath pale skin, every subtle hitch of breath, every possible sign of pain he might have caused without meaning to, or worse - while meaning to, even if only for a moment.

“I—I mean—Sensei, I need to explain,” he blurts out, the words spilling over one another in a desperate rush that leaves him breathless, his voice climbing over itself as if speed alone might make the confession less damning. “I didn’t—I swear I didn’t know at first, I thought you were—I thought you were fully awake, or at least more awake than you were, and I knew something was wrong, I did, I just didn’t understand how bad it still was, how much of it was still the drugs, and then you said my name and I—”

He cuts himself off abruptly, choking on the rest of the sentence, jaw tightening as he drags a hand through his hair with enough force to tug at the roots, a self-punishing gesture that feels almost involuntary, as though he is trying to physically pull the memory out of his own head.

“I should have stopped,” Yuuji continues more quietly, the volume dropping but the weight increasing, his voice cracking despite the obvious effort he is making to keep it steady, to be composed, to be worthy of even being heard. “I should have stopped even if you—even if you said it was okay, because it wasn’t, not really, not like that, and I know that, I do know that, Sensei, I just— I didn’t think, or maybe I did think and that’s worse, and I—”

His breath hitches, sharp and uneven, and for a second it looks like he might actually fold in on himself under the sheer gravity of it.

“I’m sorry,” he says finally. The words are simple, unadorned, stripped of any attempt at justification, and they land heavy in the space between them, not dramatic, not performative, but dense with genuine self-reproach, with the kind of guilt that does not expect forgiveness and would not know what to do with it if it came.

Satoru watches him in silence, his gaze steady, unreadable, lingering

long enough that Yuuji's shoulders begin to tense further, muscles tightening as he braces for a verdict that never quite arrives, for anger, or disappointment, or disgust—anything that would give the moment a shape he can understand.

Finally, Satoru exhales. It is a quiet sound, more tired than anything else, carrying the weight of someone who has spent too long being careful with other people's emotions and no longer feels obligated to cushion the truth.

"Stop," Satoru says softly. The word is gentle in volume, but it lands with undeniable force.

Yuuji freezes. His mouth opens, then closes again, the shape of words forming and dissolving uselessly behind his teeth as if language itself has turned traitor, piling up too fast and too heavy for him to sort through, while he forces himself to remain still on the edge of the bed, spine locked rigid, hands trembling where they rest against his thighs, fingers digging into fabric hard enough to ache. The instinct to kneel presses up violently from somewhere deep and old in him—to bow, to beg, to confess not just what he has done but everything he has ever thought, every want he has tried to bury beneath duty and devotion—yet it all snarls in his throat, finding nowhere to go, trapped there as pressure instead of sound.

Satoru exhales slowly.

The breath leaves him in a long, measured stream, carefully portioned, as though he is pacing himself the way one does with painkillers or truth, aware that too much emotion at once might crack something he does not have the energy, or perhaps the will, to repair. His chest rises and falls beneath bruised skin, the movement unhurried, deliberate.

"I heard you," he says at last, voice even, almost gentle, and that gentleness lands far more cruelly than anger ever could. "All of it."

Yuuji's shoulders sag a fraction, the tension that had been holding him upright collapsing inward instead of releasing, guilt rushing back in full force at the absence of absolution. His head bows instinctively, chin dipping toward his chest as if bracing for punishment, for rejection, for anything sharp and final that might feel proportionate to the weight pressing against his ribs. But Satoru gives him none of that.

"You keep apologizing like I'm a judge," Satoru continues, eyes drifting briefly toward the ceiling, tracking the faint movement of

light as it slides across wooden beams in slow, indifferent increments, “and I don’t have the energy for that role anymore.”

He pauses, fingers curling lightly into the sheets beneath him, the fabric creasing under the subtle pressure, as if grounding himself in something tangible, something that will not ask anything of him in return. Yuuji flinches visibly at that, nails biting into his palms hard enough to sting, the reminder slicing through him with surgical precision. Satoru notices, of course. He always notices.

“You did ask,” he says quietly, and now there is something cutting beneath the calm, something precise and unsentimental. “I remember answering. That doesn’t make it simple,” He lets that settle, then adds, almost absently, “Memory doesn’t equal clarity. But don’t pretend you didn’t want to hear what I gave you.”

The air tightens, drawn thin between them. Yuuji swallows hard, throat working visibly as he fights the reflex to deny, to soften, to reframe everything as accident or misunderstanding, as though intent might be diluted if he handles it carefully enough.

“I wanted you alive,” he says finally, voice shaking despite the iron grip he tries to keep on it.

“And?” Satoru presses, gently but relentlessly, like a blade testing the seam of armor it already knows is flawed.

Yuuji’s hands tremble openly now.

“I wanted you,” he admits, the words tearing free like something pulled out by force rather than choice.

Satoru watches him in silence. It is not a passive silence. It is measured, deliberate, the kind he once used before deciding whether an enemy was worth killing or sparing. He feels the weight of his own body pressed into the bed, the pull of sore muscles and bruised skin grounding him in the present, and with it comes the awareness that this moment, this pause, is something he is choosing. He exhales slowly, carefully, as though letting the breath go too quickly might knock the balance out of place.

“So,” Satoru says at last, voice even, almost conversational, “what do you want to do now?”

The question is simple, and that is what makes it dangerous. Yuuji startles, lifting his head, clearly unprepared for the responsibility

being handed back to him.

The question lands quietly, without drama, but it hits like a test. Not a trap. Not an accusation. An opening. For a fleeting, treacherous moment, something inside Satoru tightens, not hope exactly, but the memory of it, the echo of a time when he still believed people could choose better if given the chance. Yuuji had grown up differently than the others, had been taught to care before he was taught to conquer, had learned restraint alongside strength instead of confusing the two. Satoru hates himself a little for wondering if that difference still matters.

He waits. Yuuji looks up slowly, eyes glassy but earnest, fear and determination tangled together in a way that makes it impossible to mistake one for the other.

“I don’t want to trap you,” he says immediately, the words rushing out as if he’s afraid that hesitating will make them sound like a lie. “I don’t want to keep you here, or own you, or decide things for you. I just— I didn’t want to lose you again.”

The admission hangs between them, bare and unguarded. Satoru feels it then—a subtle loosening beneath his ribs, so small he almost misses it, a release he refuses to acknowledge aloud. He does not let it show. He cannot afford to. Instead, he nods once, slowly, as though filing the answer away for later examination.

“That’s good,” he says, not warmly, not coldly, simply factual. “Because I’m not interested in being possessed by anyone, even gently.”

He shifts, carefully, ignoring the familiar flare of discomfort, and when he speaks again his tone is quieter, stripped down to essentials.

“There are still things in my system,” Satoru says. “Residue. Echoes. They blur edges, make feelings bleed into each other in ways that aren’t honest. That means I’m not at my clearest right now, no matter how composed I look.”

His gaze fixes on Yuuji, unflinching. “So here’s the line,” he continues. “You don’t touch me again unless I’m clear enough to ask for it without hesitation, without curse drugs doing the talking for me. You don’t interpret my silence as permission, and you don’t decide what I need because you’re afraid of losing me.”

Yuuji nods immediately, sharply, like the movement itself is a vow. “I

understand. I swear."

Satoru studies him for a long moment, searching not for promises but for comprehension, for the difference between obedience and choice.

"Good," he says finally, leaning back against the pillows, gaze drifting once more toward the light. "Then we'll see what you do with that understanding."

He does not offer reassurance.
He does not offer forgiveness.
He offers space.

And waits.

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Sukuna did not announce himself; he never . The world simply *shifted,* not violently, not all at once, but with the subtle wrongness of something ancient settling its weight into a space that had not consented to bear it. The air thickened, pressure gathering like blood before a kill, the horizon bending in on itself as though the sea had decided, abruptly, to hold its breath. Satoru felt it long before he saw anything: the old, intimate warning crawling up his spine, the memory of a time when the world itself used to whisper *run*, even when he never had to listen.

He stood barefoot on the balcony, toes curling faintly against warm stone, the salt wind tugging at his hair with idle persistence. The afternoon sun was pale and unforgiving, bleaching color from everything it touched. The cursed band weighed heavy on his wrist, its silver cool against skin that remembered heat far too vividly, remembered hands, remembered restraint. Below him, the ocean rolled on in endless repetition, indifferent, eternal, unconcerned with gods or curses or the fragile negotiations of human will.

Behind him, the shadow deepened. "You chose a noisy place to hide," Sukuna said.

The voice was close, close enough that Satoru felt the warmth of it ghost along the shell of his ear, intimate in the way only predators ever were, the kind of closeness that was not meant to comfort but to

remind, to mark territory without ever needing to touch. It carried weight, that voice, not loud or forceful, but dense, like something ancient settling into the space behind his shoulder as though it had always belonged there.

Satoru did not turn around. He kept his gaze on the sea, on the endless, indifferent stretch of water rolling and breaking far below the balcony, salt wind threading through his hair and tugging gently at the loose fabric at his shoulders. His posture remained relaxed, too relaxed to be mistaken for ignorance, unguarded in a way that was anything but careless, the stance of someone who knew exactly where the blade was even when he refused to acknowledge it.

“Funny,” he replied mildly, voice even, almost conversational, as though Sukuna’s presence were no more alarming than the weather. “I was thinking the same about you.”

For a heartbeat, there was only the sound of the waves. Then came a chuckle, low, resonant, vibrating through the air rather than merely passing through it, the sound of something that had learned patience over centuries and had never once confused it with mercy. It carried amusement, yes, but also hunger held in check, a reminder that restraint, for monsters like this, was always a choice.

“Still sharp,” Sukuna said, the words drawn out just enough to suggest appraisal rather than praise. “Even dulled.”

That did it. Satoru turned, not abruptly, not with the instinctive snap of someone startled or threatened, but smoothly, deliberately, as though he had simply decided the view behind him was finally worth his attention. He faced Sukuna with a calm that bordered on insolence, pale eyes steady, expression unreadable save for the faintest curl of amusement at the corner of his mouth, an echo of the man he had been before the world had tried, and failed, to grind him down.

Sukuna stood where the light should have been, kimono dark as a bruise, fabric absorbing brightness rather than reflecting it. The markings along his skin were faint but restless, shifting subtly like ink that refused to stay fixed, as though his body itself resisted being contained by a single shape. His eyes were locked on Satoru with open appetite, not the careless hunger of a beast but the slow, deliberate interest of a king deciding whether to conquer, destroy, or keep.

They stared at one another. It felt obscene, standing like this, sea breeze between them, sunlight spilling across Satoru’s bare shoulders,

as though they were merely two old rivals meeting by chance rather than the apex of a war that had never truly ended, only paused.

“You’re alive,” Sukuna said at last. “Disappointingly intact.”

Satoru smiled. It did not reach his eyes. “You sound relieved.”

Sukuna stepped closer. The space shrank around him, walls bowing subtly to his presence, reality bending just enough to acknowledge something older than law. “Relief is for the weak,” he said. “I was curious.”

His gaze slid unapologetically over Satoru’s throat, his wrists, the faint bruising that had not yet faded along his hips.

“Others touched you,” Sukuna said softly.

It was not a question. Satoru felt it in the way the words settled rather than struck, in the certainty with which Sukuna named what he saw, as if bodies were texts he had been reading since before language learned to lie. He did not look down at himself, did not follow Sukuna’s gaze where it traced the evidence left behind; instead, his smile sharpened by degrees, a thin, deliberate curve that carried more warning than warmth.

“You don’t get to audit my body,” Satoru said, tone light, almost bored, as though this were an administrative overreach rather than a provocation, as though he were humoring a junior official who had forgotten their place. For a fleeting instant, something crossed Sukuna’s expression, amusement, yes, but edged with irritation, the kind that surfaced when resistance proved more resilient than anticipated. It vanished as quickly as it came.

“I get to,” Sukuna replied calmly, voice even, unhurried, “because they believed they owned what belongs to no one.”

He extended a hand - not to touch, not yet - but close enough that heat bloomed along Satoru’s skin anyway, instinct flaring sharp and immediate, a buried reflex screaming danger even as Satoru’s reason held the line with disciplined precision. He did not flinch. He did not step back. He let the space between them remain exactly as it was, neither yielding nor inviting.

“They tried to tame you,” Sukuna continued, voice lowering, words chosen with deliberate cruelty. “A god into a pet. A storm into a cup.”

His fingers brushed Satoru's wrist then, grazing the silver chain with infuriating familiarity, not enough to restrain, just enough to acknowledge its presence.

"And you," Sukuna murmured, closer now, "almost let them."

Satoru inhaled slowly, deeply, grounding himself not in memory but in the steady mechanics of breath, in the simple, incontrovertible fact of being here, standing, unbroken. He felt the echo of anger rise, and dismissed it just as easily. Anger was reactive. He had no intention of giving Sukuna that satisfaction.

"Careful," he said instead, voice smooth, eyes cool. "You're projecting."

Sukuna laughed outright this time, the sound resonant and unrestrained, carrying the weight of something that had survived mockery, worship, and hatred alike without ever mistaking any of it for power. "You always did mistake honesty for insult," he said.

His grip tightened then, not painfully, not enough to bruise, but with unmistakable intent, the suggestion of claim implied rather than declared, a reminder of how easily possession could masquerade as certainty.

"You know why I didn't kill you," Sukuna continued, voice dropping, intimate now in a way that made the air itself feel thinner. "Even when you were sealed. Even when you were weak enough to break."

Satoru met his gaze without hesitation, without bravado, eyes clear and unyielding. "Because you wanted to," he said simply.

The smile that answered was razor-thin, sharp with approval rather than denial. "Because I refuse to eat something already chewed." Sukuna leaned in, breath ghosting across Satoru's cheek, close enough to invade without touching, close enough to remind him how narrow the margin between restraint and indulgence truly was.

"You are not prey," Sukuna said. "Not to children playing tyrant. Not to lovers who mistake fear for devotion. And not—" his thumb brushed deliberately over the pulse at Satoru's wrist, slow, measured "—to a vessel who believes worship absolves desire."

Satoru's throat worked once before he spoke, a small, involuntary acknowledgment he did not bother to hide. "Yuuji," he said quietly.

“Yes,” Sukuna replied at once. “That problem.”

The air trembled faintly then, a subtle ripple of awareness, someone listening, far away, layered beneath restraint and guilt and a will still learning how to carry its own weight.

“He’s not you,” Satoru said, tone firm, certain. “And he’s not them.”

Sukuna’s eyes narrowed, focus sharpening.

“He is becoming.”

“Everyone is,” Satoru shot back without missing a beat. “Including you.”

For the first time since his arrival, Sukuna paused. He studied Satoru then, not as a rival, not as a conquest, but as one might study a blade that had passed through too many hands, been used, mishandled, sharpened again and again, and still refused to lose its edge.

“You don’t fear me,” Sukuna said slowly.

“I respect you,” Satoru corrected, chin lifting just enough to make the distinction unmistakable. “There’s a difference.” And in that difference, in the space where fear failed to take root, his pride remained intact, unbowed, quietly daring anyone who stood before him to mistake endurance for surrender.

“And yet,” Sukuna murmured, voice lowering, threading itself into the space between heartbeats, “your pulse says otherwise.”

Two fingers rose, unhurried, and pressed lightly to Satoru’s throat, once, then again, never enough to hurt, never enough to restrain, just enough to remind him that his body still spoke a language older than pride, older than reason. Sukuna withdrew them as easily as he had placed them there, as though the contact itself were beneath notice, as though he had already learned everything he wanted to know.

“I did not come to claim you,” Sukuna said then, tone flattening into something deliberate. “Nor to test you. Not yet.”

Satoru let out a quiet breath through his nose and lifted a brow, the expression lazy, unimpressed, carefully curated to suggest that nothing about this encounter had shifted the balance of his world. “How generous,” he replied.

Sukuna's smile cut wider at that, not offended, not amused, but sharpened by the recognition of a familiar defiance that refused to erode even now.

"I came," Sukuna continued, turning his gaze back toward the sea as if addressing the horizon itself, "to warn you."

Below them, the ocean surged harder against the rocks, waves collapsing into white violence that echoed up the cliffside, salt spray breaking apart into mist as though the world itself were restless under the weight of unspoken truths.

"The boy will offer you chains made of promises," Sukuna said, each word placed carefully, mercilessly. "He will call them love because he does not yet know the difference. He will swear them clean because he believes intention absolves impact. And one day, if you let him, he will look at you and decide that endurance is consent, that survival is gratitude, that wanting you badly enough earns him the right to keep you."

Satoru did not flinch. If anything, his expression softened, not in surrender, but in something far more dangerous: curiosity edged with resolve, the faint glimmer of someone who had already been stripped of illusion and found that the absence of it did not break him.

"And what would you call it," he asked calmly, voice light as sea foam, "if I chose him anyway?"

Sukuna turned back to him then, eyes bright with interest, the kind that did not demand agreement so much as welcome resistance.

"I would call it interesting," he said. The word carried no judgment. No approval. Only anticipation.

He pivoted toward the door, shadows responding instantly, peeling back from the walls and floor like living things eager to follow their master's retreat, the room already beginning to feel smaller in his absence.

"But remember this, Gojo Satoru," Sukuna added over his shoulder, his voice carrying effortlessly through the space. "If you kneel, kneel because you wish to. Not because someone begged. Not because someone bled. Not because you mistook desire for salvation."

He paused just long enough for the weight of that to settle.

“And if anyone breaks you again,” Sukuna continued lightly, almost conversational, “I will enjoy breaking them more.”

Then the pressure vanished. The room exhaled, wood creaking softly as though released from a held breath, the salt air rushing back in to reclaim the space Sukuna had occupied.

Satoru remained where he was, barefoot on the balcony, the roar of the sea below steady and indifferent, his heart beating evenly in his chest, not calm, not healed, not resolved, but awake in a way it had not been for a very long time.

Chapter End Notes

> If you have any thoughts or if this chapter leaves you any feeling, please comment~~~ I really appreciate reading comments since it's like one of the only ways I'm getting stressed off my MBA degree right now - you know, all the networking and hustling and finding a job. Thank you so much!!!

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